Strong Horses—Systems Thinking—Strategic Communication

A Monograph

by

MAJ Mark B. Sherkey

U.S. Army

School of Advanced Military Studies

United States Army Command and General Staff College

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14. ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the theories of Pragmatic Communications, Cybernetics, and Perturbation under the framework of the Pragmatic Complexity Model to illustrate how two Presidential administrations beginning in the 20th and 21st centuries used 'new media' and systems thinking to communicate to both international and domestic audiences. Moreover, the study provides examples of how each used narratives to counter opposing ideologies. Similarly, this monograph explores two notions of Chinese thought, potential and propensity, which prove useful for studying diplomacy and strategic communication. The monograph explains why a systems approach coupled with cybernetics is the future for strategic communication, why the Pragmatic Complexity Model proves a plausible replacement for the 20th century Message-Influence Model, and how 'new media' technology provides better opportunities to compete in the global war of ideas.

The analysis of the Pragmatic Complexity Model reveals four core principles that should be adopted: 1) control of message is impossible; 2) less messaging is better; 3) the intent is not to persuade or influence audiences, rather perturb stable system structures; and 4) expect messages to fail rather than succeed, signaling the need for message contingencies. Nested within this model are elements of complex adaptive systems theory, emergence, and the vital importance of understanding the global information environment's propensity to produce emergent properties and added degrees of risk when looking for choices of intervention.

Two Presidential Administrations in the 20th and 21st century were explored. The first case study focused on President Theodore Roosevelt, the significance of the Panama Canal, and his use of the "Great White Fleet" to communicate to both international and domestic audiences American ingenuity and the nation's ability to project power. Each of these events in history were inputs into the global information environment and demonstrated the principles of the Pragmatic Complexity Model. The second case study focused on the nation's newest President Barack Obama and his use of 'new media' technology to communicate to both international and domestic audiences. Like President T. Roosevelt, President Obama competes in the global 'war of ideas' through his administration's synchronization of his actions and narrative. More research certainly is needed to truly compare President Obama's presidency to President T. Roosevelt; however, in the context of using 'new media' technology and the use of narratives to communicate strategically to an array of audiences in the 21st century proves a useful study.

The relevance of this study demonstrates that the 20th century Message-Influence Model needs to be replaced. Given the complexity of the information environment a message sent should no longer be assumed to succeed as intended. Given there is no cabinet level agency responsible for the nation's message, the President arguably is the defacto leader of the "I." Thus, a Presidential administration must view the global information environment systemically when communicating, must embrace 'new media,' use cybernetics, and adopt the principles of the Pragmatic Complexity Model to be competitive in the 21st century global 'war of ideas.'

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Approved by:

_____ Monograph Director
Jacob W. Kipp, Ph. D.

_____ Monograph Reader
Jeffrey Goble, COL, SF

_____ Director,
Stefan Banach, COL, IN   School of Advanced
    Military Studies

_____ Director,
Robert F. Baumann, Ph. D.   Graduate Degree
    Programs

ABSTRACT

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I say, let pre-war feuds die; let personnel quarrels be forgotten, and let us keep our hatreds for the common enemy. Let Party interests be ignored, let all our energies be harnessed, let the whole ability and forces of the nation be hurled into the struggle, and let the strong horses be pulling on the collar.[1]

-Winston S. Churchill, May 1940

Winston Churchill's message is timeless and proves salient to many nations in the geo-political landscape of the 21ˢᵗ century, none more so than the United States. His call for partisan bickering to be put aside and renewal of nationalism certainly are ideas espoused by many who long for a concerted effort to change course. Like Churchill and F.D.R's "Four Freedoms" addressed in 1940-1941, it is essential to refocus and reframe American policies today to leverage all elements of national power to compete in the global "*war of ideas.*"[2] Determining what enablers and which leaders will emerge in this ideological struggle certainly warrants attention.[3]

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[1] Martin, Gilbert. *Winston Churchill's War Leadership* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 33. Churchill makes his appeal during a debate in the House of Commons when Chamberlain's leadership and his conduct of the Norwegian Campaign were both under attack.

[2] Antulio J. Echevarria II, "Wars of Ideas and The War of Ideas," Strategic Studies Institute, USAWC (June 2008): 4-5. Echevarria states, "It is important to note the difference between wars in which ideas are used mainly to support a physical clash of arms, and others where ideas are either the casus belli or the principal weapons. Both types of conflicts are, strictly speaking, wars of ideas. In the former, however, military power initially plays a leading role by defeating an opponent's armed might, then shifts to a secondary, yet still important role by providing security during reconstruction. In the latter, military power may play only a limited role or perhaps none at all. As noted earlier, U.S. officials see the current war on terror as a combined effort, involving both physical and ideational elements, with the latter more important, if not decisive, than the former. This emphasis suggests that the United States sees itself as engaged in the second type of wars of ideas, where physical force plays a supporting role."

[3] Karl Mannheim distinguishes two types of ideological categories: "Particular" and "Total." The context of ideology within this paper will be defined as Mannheim's "Total ideology"—which contends that there are broad categories of thought that might lend to ways of interpreting the environment which one is operating within. Put another way, Total ideology focuses on structural differences of the way one interprets their surroundings due to ones environmental setting. Manheim updates the concept of ideology and differs from Marxist theory in two respects: first, he expands on the Marxist notion that economic class position is the grounds of ideology by identifying that social locations are just as important of function of society; and second, Mannheim rejects Marxist claims that a class may be ordained by history with an advantaged point of view. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1936).

Perhaps, the metaphor of "strong horses pulling on the collar" is implicit of the transformative power of strategic communication and that of a presidential administrations' ability to shed agency parochial concerns under the auspices of national security.

Currently, there is no Department of Information (I) or cabinet level agency responsible for harnessing all government information activities.[4] Given this recognition, the President of the United States arguably is the de-facto leader of the "I" until a cabinet level position is created or he delegates commensurate authorities and resources to someone else. Presently, the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs is charged with the monumental task to lead America's public diplomacy outreach efforts. This includes communicating with international audiences through a host of programs and exchanges, and assisting U.S. Government (USG) efforts to confront ideological support for terrorism. However, authorities for this position do not extend beyond that of Department of State (DOS), and resources are far from sufficient to meet the emerging challenges of the 21st century global information environment (GIE).[5]

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[4] The United States Information Agency (USIA) operated from 1943-1999. Its purpose was to serve as an independent foreign affairs agency supporting U.S. foreign policy and national interests abroad, USIA conducted international educational and cultural exchanges, broadcasting, and information programs.

[5] Robert M. Gates, "Remarks by Secretary of Defense at U.S. Global Leadership Campaign Tribute Dinner," 15 July 2008. Defense Secretary Gates reinforces this statement with his remarks, "We have made significant progress towards pulling ourselves out of the hole created not only by steep cutbacks in the wake of the Cold War—but also by the lack of adequate resources for the State Department and the entire foreign affairs account going back decades. It has become clear that America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long—relative to what we spend on the military, and more important, relative to the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world. I cannot pretend to know the right dollar amount—I know it's a good deal more than the one percent of the federal budget that is right now. " The Global Information Environment is defined in FM 100-6 Chapter 1 as "an expanding information domain that contains those information processes and systems that are beyond the direct influence of the military or even the National Command Authorities (NCA), but nevertheless may directly impact the success or failure of military operations."

A common theme amongst the sources reviewed claim that America's influence and reputation in the international community have declined over the past several years—largely due to waging an unpopular war in Iraq and a global economic recession that many believe stems from Wall Street's push of "toxic" mortgage backed securities (MBS) into world markets. Further complicating the dilemma is the USG public diplomacy cadre remains atrophied from a 1991 Post-Cold War peace dividend. Paradoxically, a pluralist government that provided the structures, processes, and freedom for scientists to develop the internet remains inept to counter ideological and technical support to individual terrorist organizations. Today, terrorists embrace the power of strategic communication as a form of "political warfare" that capitalizes on the speed of technology and the use of "new media" to proselytize their ideology.[6]

To make matters worse, many scholars raise alarm that the "present strategic communication efforts by the U.S. and its allies rest on an outdated 20th century Message Influence Model" that fails to take into account problems of emergence, interdependence, complexity and scale, and feedback needed to effectively compete in a global "war of ideas."[7] Richard Haass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations and author of *The Opportunity*, uses the following quote from Charles-Maurice Talleyrand to emphasize this exact point: "You can do everything with bayonets, but you are not able to sit on them."[8] One can infer from this remark that the military is an instrument of power that alone will not achieve desired political

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[6] Richard J. Josten, "Strategic Communication: Key Enabler for Elements of National Power," IOSPHERE (Summer 2006):16-20.

[7] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr. *Weapons of Mass Persuasion: Strategic Communication To Combat Violent Extremism* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 151. The communication model underlying current Western strategic communication practices connotes the Message-Influence Model or Aristotle Model.

[8] Richard N. Haass, *The Opportunity: America's Moment to Alter History's Course*. (New York, New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 203.

aims. Only through a systems-thinking and whole-of-government approach will the USG compete effectively in the global "war of ideas."[9]

The questions in this case are not "why," but "what" communication model to implement and what emerging technologies may be used to advance USG efforts to reach intended audiences. Thus, a Presidential administration that takes a systems approach to visualizing the global information environment, embraces the use of 'new media,' and harnesses elements of information across the whole-of-government will be better able to conduct strategic communication, and most importantly provide a narrative to counter opposing ideologies. In order to understand the argument— which concedes that a systems approach coupled with the use of 'new media' is the way forward for strategic communication efforts—it is best to gain a brief understanding as to what constitutes a *system*, *systems thinking*, '*new media*,' and *strategic communication*.

System

According to Alex Ryan, complex systems scientist, a system is "a representation of an entity as a complex whole open to feedback from its environment."[10] Within the context of systems theory there are numerous definitions of a system; however, for the purpose of this paper Ryan's was selected. Ryan emphasizes that the definition may not be able to distinguish when a part of the world is a system; however, it can serve as a guide regarding when it may be plausible

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[9] Robert M. Gates, "Remarks by Secretary of Defense at the Landon Lecture held at Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, 26 November 2007. Defense Secretary Gates states, "My message is that if we are to meet the myriad challenges around the world in the coming decades, this country must strengthen other important elements of national power both institutionally and financially, and create the capability to integrate and apply all of the elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad."

to utilize a systems approach.[11] In this light, one can see the parallel of a complex whole to that of a population and the relevance to understanding a population's *propensity* for change.[12] Moreover, incorporating knowledge that populations are not static in nature into how strategic leaders think about strategic communication prove salient when attempting to test the system with messages and actions.

Systems Thinking

Peter Senge, learning organizational theorist and noted author of *The Fifth Discipline,* suggests systems thinking requires a mindset willing to embrace the logic of the system holistically not just any individual part of the pattern.[13] He implies that since humans are not separate from the system, it becomes more difficult to observe any significant pattern of change. Due to this nature, humans tend to focus on isolated parts of the system and never fully see the system as a whole. This is one of the many contributing factors regarding why complex problems rarely are solved and the reason the 20th century Message-Influence Model needs replacing.[14]

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[10] Alex Ryan, "What is a Systems Approach?,"ArXiV, (2008), 31, http://arxiv.org/PS_cache/arxiv/pdf/0809/0809.1698v1.pdf (accessed on March 2, 2009).

[11] Ibid., 2

[12] Francois Julien, *A Treatise of Efficacy* (Oahu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), 16. Propensity is discussed by Francois Jullien in Chapter 2: Julien states—"Instead of constructing an ideal form that we then project on things, we could try to detect the factors whose configuration is favorable to the task at hand; instead of setting up a goal for our actions, we could allow ourselves to be carried along by the propensity of things. In short, instead of imposing our plan upon the world, we could rely on the potential inherent in the situation" (16). Definitions abound for potential and propensity; however, for the treatment of this body of work, Francois Julien's definitions are most applicable.

[13] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1990), 7.

[14] Ibid., 7

Above all, the realization that there are no neutral audiences, that the environment and everything in it is constantly evolving, and that emergent properties likely will appear, are indications of systems thinking.[15] In this context, "systems thinking" is not new. Rather, it is a bi-product of a fusion between management, philosophy, and science that emerged during the Industrial Revolution of the 19th and 20th centuries.[16] It is important to understand that messages and actions intended for one audience often have unintended consequences on another. Once these messages and actions are sent, the dynamics of the system continue in a state of flux. Thus, conditions that were present before, during, and after may not produce the conditions needed to achieve desired end results being a shift in behavior by the intended audience. Nearly a year ago, Defense Secretary Gates, reinforced this point by stating that "*success will be less a matter of imposing one's will and more a function of shaping behavior—of friends, adversaries, and most importantly, the people in between.*"[17]

'New Media'

'*New Media*' is not synonymous with the 21st century. Every century produces innovative leaders and emerging technologies that alter the dynamics of the environment and the system as a whole. Take the 20th century for example, during this age known as the Industrial Revolution

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[15] Yaneer Bar-Yam, *Making Things Work: Solving Complex Problems in a Complex World* (US: NECSI Knowledge Press, 2004), 27. Bar-Yam defines emergence as relational between the details of a system and a larger view. Emergence seeks to discover, to move between different perspectives. Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected lives of ants, brains, cities, and software* (New York: Scribner, 2004), 18. Whereas, Steven Johnson, defines Emergence as the movement from low-level rules to higher-level sophistication. Johnson posits that in order to see emergence as a pattern you need to encounter it in several contexts: Keller and Segel saw emergence in the slime mold assemblages; Jane Jacobs saw it in city neighborhoods; Marvin Minsky saw it in distributed networks of the human brain.

[16] Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General System Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications*, rev. ed. (New York: George Braziller, 1993).

[17] Robert M. Gates, 2007.

inventions such as the telephone in 1876, followed by the radio, television, computers, cell

phones and the creation of the internet served as the rising tide for communication.

Fast forward to the 21st century, where iphones and social networking technology has

transformed the way individuals now receive their information and how they communicate. Like

the threats that emerged in the 20th century, the 21st century has witnessed unintended

consequences from the Technological Revolution. That is the nexus between emerging

technologies and violent extremist operating in the global information environment. Thomas

Friedman, New York Times columnist, describes the as—

> *Until the advent of the Internet, terrorists' hopes of winning publicity for their causes and activities depended on attracting the attention of television, radio, or the print media. The fact that terrorists themselves have direct control over the content of their websites offers further opportunities to shape how they are perceived by different target audiences and to manipulate their image and the images of their enemies...Hell hath no fury like a terrorist with a satellite dish and an interactive Web site.*[18]

Since the release of Friedman's book in 2005, technological advances have continued and largely

surpassed *Web 1.0* capabilities. Now *Web 2.0,* also referred to as "*social media*" or 'new media,'

serves as a platform for a new generation of dynamic social web applications and services.[19] The

most notable examples of 'new media' are Facebook, MySpace, You Tube, and Twitter

applications. In effect, 'new media' presents an opportunity the USG may leverage to influence

international audiences, inform domestic audiences, and counter terrorist propaganda.

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[18] Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 432, 436.

[19] Amy Shuen, *Web 2.0: A Strategy Guide* (Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media, Inc., 2008), xvi.

Strategic Communication

Defining strategic communication proves challenging considering the ongoing debate within policy circles regarding what the term actually means. Multiple definitions abound. For brevity's sake, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Military Support to Public Diplomacy (MSPD) team defines strategic communication as—"*employing information coupled with actions to align target audience perceptions with policy goals.*"[20] Noticeably absent within this definition are the words "influence" and "persuasion." For this reason, this definition proves most salient and in agreement with the Consortium for Strategic Communication (CSC) Pragmatic Complexity Model.

Under the umbrella of Strategic Communication (SC) lies an assortment of information tools used by both civilians and military. However, not all information tools are equal nor found in each government agency. Those tools include but are not limited to: Information and Psychological operations (IO/PSYOP); Public Affairs (PA); Public Diplomacy (PD); Theater Security Cooperation (TSC); and Visual and Broadcast Information (VBI) operations. This list makes explicit strategic communication's function. However, due to the nature of the GIE, new technology often emerges producing new ways to communicate. Thus, it is best to view strategic communication through the MSPD definition.

Pragmatic Complexity Model

Having reviewed numerous scholarly works on strategic communication and systems theory, it appears the SPD and Pragmatic Complexity Model (PCOM) are complimentary of one another. The Pragmatic Complexity Model, developed by Steven Corman, Angela Trethewey,

and Bud Goodall in April 2007, serves as a useful systems model to analyze successful and unsuccessful uses of strategic communication by Presidential administrations.[21]

This new model integrates a systems approach with communication theory to embrace complexity and understand that systems have emergent properties. A distinguishing characteristic of this model is that it takes into account that the communication process is not completely under anyone's control.[22] Unlike linear, 20th century models, where repetition of message are prescribed, PCOM stresses "less is more" and the purpose of communication is not to gain acceptance and influence receivers, but "to perturb the communication system and overcome its tendency to interpret and attribute in standard ways."[23] Unlike linear sender-receiver models of the past, this model assumes that "*failure is the norm.*" PCOM proves refreshing for its acknowledgment that the environment is constantly changing due to the emergence of social-political-economic factors weighing on the system. In this context, PCOM serves as a complex systems approach to thinking critically about the information environment in which states and non-state actors now compete.

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[20] Sina Lehmkuhler, Presidential Management Fellow OSD Support to Public Diplomacy, interview by author, Washington, DC, March 5, 2008.

[21] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 159.

[22] Ibid., 160

[23] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 162. Admiral Raoul Castex, French Navy, describes the "Theory of Pertubation" in the *Classics of Sea Power*. Castex states—"One flouring nation, bounding with energy and thirsting with ambition, hopes to dominate all. Its essential characteristic is youth, vitality, and the possession of an untapped storehouse of human energy, and this characteristic explains everything because it implies brilliant activity in every direction. The *perturbateur*, powerful in manpower, in resources, in policy, and in arms, overtly manifests the intention of absorbing and erasing its neighbors" (Castex, 404).

To fully understand the implications of a Pragmatic Complexity approach to strategic communication, it is necessary to first look at history and apply the pre-stated assumption that the President of the United States is the defacto leader of the "I." With this in mind, this study analyzes two Presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and Barak Obama, and the ways in which their presidential administrations implemented a systems approach to engage the global information environment. Similarly, Roosevelt and Obama understood that perturbing the international and domestic political systems were needed to change the propensity of their inherited political system. The intent is to compare these two charismatic presidents and their uses of new technology to conduct strategic communication more effectively. Additionally, the importance of cybernetic feedback channels prove invaluable for accounting for shifts in international behavior and norms.[24] Explicit within the analysis is the notion that the Message-Influence Model needs to be overhauled from linear Western logic to one that is systemic and accounts for the logic of the intended audience.

President Theodore Roosevelt (TR) and President Barak Obama faced different challenges akin to their day; TR led during a time when the United States was not at war; however, still faced challenges in the Pacific and Caribbean basin. On the other hand, President Obama currently faces a global financial crisis and two military conflicts abroad (Iraq & Afghanistan). What remains striking is their understanding of the importance of strategic communication. President Theodore Roosevelt used print, radio and television to promote naval innovation via the "Great White Fleet" and by showcasing American ingenuity through the building of the Panama Canal. Though technology has changed extensively since TR's

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[24] Louis Couffignal, a pioneer of cybernetics, defined the term as "the art of ensuring the efficacy of action."

presidency, President Barak Obama also embraces 'new media' to communicate messages to both international and domestic audiences. As displayed during the Presidential campaign, President Obama and his staff used social media technologies to connect with the American populace to grow his domestic base while using the web platforms (Web 2.0) to communicate his vision of change to international and domestic audiences. Likewise, TR and President Obama incorporated narratives that helped describe and explain the nation's policies and served as a counter to opposing ideologies of their respective day.

The following chapters further explain: 1) *why a systems approach coupled with cybernetics is the future for strategic communication*; 2) *why the Pragmatic Complexity Model proves a plausible replacement for the 20th century Communications model*; and 3) *how new technology provides better opportunities to compete in the global " war of ideas."*

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the literature and an analysis of each piece's relevance to understanding a systems approach in the global information environment, advancing the call for an updated USG communication model, and embracing the use of 'new media' to conduct strategic communication efforts more effectively. A synthesis of notable theorists, scholars, and military practitioners in the fields of information strategy, political and social sciences, communication systems and complexity theory were explored to shed light on this subject. Research questions pertain to what communication model to implement and what emerging technologies may be used to advance USG efforts to reach intended audiences.

The following systems and learning organizational theorists were used to complement the works of Steven Corman and associated staff from the Consortium for Strategic Communication (CSC) at Arizona State University to explain why a new communications model is needed. Karl Ludwig von Bertallanfy, *General Systems Theory: Foundations, Development, Applications*;

Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*; W. Walsh Ashby, *An introduction to cybernetics*; Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life*; Yaneer Bar-Yam, *Making Things Work:Solving Complex Problems in a Complex World*; and Alex Ryan, "What is a Systems Approach?," and "Emergence is Coupled to Scope, Not Level;" and Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected lives of ants, brains, cities, and software* were primary references used to understand the components of systems theory and sytems thinking. Principles gleaned from these scholars helped inform the basis of the Pragmatic Complexity Model and the difficulties associated with communicating in a complex global information environment.

General Systems Theory was developed into a science over the course of the 20th century transcending multiple interdisciplinary studies such as: ontology, philosophy of science, physics, biology and engineering.[25] Founders of Systems Theory may be traced to Lawrence Henderson, Walter B. Cannon, and Ludwig von Bertalanffy.[26] Gregory Mitchell, a cognitive scientist, describes Karl Ludwig von Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory as one that "studies the structure and properties of systems in terms of relationships, from which new properties of whole emerge."[27] Applications are still found today especially in the fields of communication, social and

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[25] Ludwig von Bertalanffy, *General System Theory*,1968.

[26] Robert Lilienfeld, *The Rise in System's Theory* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1978), 12-17.

[27] Gregory Mitchell, "Bertalanffy's Genral Systems Theory," http://www.trans4mind.com/mind-development/systems.html (accessed on February 14, 2009).

political sciences.[28] Hence, Bertalanffy's view of the world has developed into a General Systems Theory (GST) which proves useful to studying the 21st century global information environment (GIE).[29]

The value of Bertalanffy's work lies in its realization of the interrelatedness and interdependence that physical, social, cultural and psychological aspects have on the dynamics of the system. Thus, when viewing the world one must look at the environment in terms of relationships and integration. Likewise, the theory identifies systems as "integrated wholes whose properties cannot be reduced to those of smaller units."[30]

Peter Senge suggests that a systems thinking approach lends itself to creating learning organizations—that is a new way for individuals to understand their relationships to the system. This paradigm shift parlays with strategic communication and gaining an appreciation for the complexities associated with the 21st century GIE. Senge asserts—"Systems thinking is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools that have been developed over the past fifty years to make full patterns clearer, and to help us see how to change them eventually."[31] In

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[28] Felisha S. Vincent, "Systems Theory," International Encyclopedia of Justice Studies (December 2002), http://www.iejs.com/Management/systems_theory.htm (accessed on March 31, 2009). Leading Systems Theorist in the field of Political Science are Karl Deutsch of Yale University and David Easton of the University of Chicago. Deutsch begins his studies looking at history of socio-political thought well before cybernetics was developed. In order to apply systems theory to political science, Deutsch believed that the "concepts of consciousness and will, memory and recognition, must be translated into cybernetic terms." Moreover, he believed that a society that received information, was able to learn, make decisions, and progressively adapt to their environment evolves (Lilienfeld, 1978, 213). According to David Easton, in order to better understand the system, one must fully be versed in how the pluralist policy making system works. James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy,* serves as a great primer for understanding the nature of culture and agency perspectives within the Washington policy making apparatus.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Gregory Mitchell, "Bertalanffy's Genral Systems Theory," http://www.trans4mind.com/mind-development/systems.html (accessed on February 14, 2009).

[31] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 7.

the context of strategic communication, systemic thinking coupled with cybernetics provides one a more informed view of the information environment.[32]

Cybernetics may be defined as "using loops in order to define the flow of information and gain feedback which produces adaptive responses throughout an organization."[33] The founders of the theory were Norbert Wiener and W. Walsh Ashby. The term "cybernetics" may be traced to Weiner in 1945, where he defined the term as "control and communication in the animal and the machine."[34] Much of Wiener's expertise in mathematics at MIT plus his partnership with an acquaintance in neurophysiology led to this theory.

Ashby's study, on the other hand, proves fascinating for he was attempting to account for patterns of change in behaviors. Thus, his concept of cybernetics was tailored towards studying what determined ways of behaving versus the material substances that do the behaving. His hypothesis was that complex systems could be studied by observing the state of the system as a whole, without concentration of certain parts, thus, a more structured understanding of stability. In this context, one identifies the applicability and importance of cybernetics to strategic communication. Alarmingly, the USG still lacks today the cybernetic capacity to detect the patterns of change in population sentiment on the outset of strategic communication messaging via web, television, and radio broadcasts. Without cybernetics serving as an integral part of strategic communication models for the 21st century, behavioral changes will not be detected in a timely manner, thus resulting in the failure of contingency messaging.

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[32] Cybernetics has been defined by many in the field of study. Most recently, Louis Kauffman, President of the American Society for Cybernetics has defined the term as "the study of systems and processes that interact with themselves and produce themselves from themselves."

[33] Felisha S. Vincent, "Systems Theory," International Encyclopedia of Justice Studies (December 2002), http://www.iejs.com/Management/systems_theory.htm (accessed on March 31, 2009).

Cybernetic theory is composed of four core components: variety, circularity, process and observation.[35] In this context, variety relates to communication theories and stresses choice for intervention. Circularity represents the flattening process of organizations. Process pertains to feedback mechanisms and observation refers to one's visualization of the environment and a decision making process. Thus, the use of cybernetics proves a pragmatic means for understanding complex social organizations and networks. Therefore, a better understanding of cybernetics provides opportunities for exploitation and a realization that control of message is impossible given the interconnectedness spawned from globalization.

Systems may be described as "open or closed." However, one should not assume that a system is wholly open or closed rather open to some and closed to others. An open system is a system which continuously interacts with its environment and allows elements or processes to move freely in and out of the system. An example of such a system would be the U.S. economic system. In this context, the economic system is "open" with respect to global capital which flows in and out of the system through deposits, withdrawals, and a host of other securities transactions. In this context, openness represents transparency. Without transparency regarding the pricing of securities in the market in relation to risk the speed and volume of exchanges will slow, thus signaling a shift in purchasing behavior and the importance of establishing feedback loops. Other systems considered "closed" due to elements or processes unable to leave the system or one that is isolated from its surrounding environment. An example of a closed system would be that of an engine where fluids are present but unable to leave the engine.

[34] Ibid.

[35] "What is Cybernetics?,"(2009) http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-cybernetics.htm (accessed on March 31, 2009).

Yaneer Bar-Yam adds to the scholarly debate and offers that one of the "central lessons of complex systems is that external forces alone cannot explain how complex patterns form— including patterns of human behavior in economic and social systems. [36] He defines a complex environment as "one that demands picking the right choice in order to succeed."[37] Like Senge, he argues that "organizations that learn by evolutionary change create an environment of ongoing innovation."[38] It is this evolutionary process of competition and cooperation that create patterns of behavior and prove valuable to synthesizing systems in order to face the complex challenges of the 21st century GIE.[39]

An additional factor worth noting when analyzing degrees of complexity of a situation is scale. Bar-Yam defines scale as "the number of parts of a system that act together in a strictly coordinated way."[40] He states that complexity of scale is dependent on how independent entities within the system operate. In the context of strategic communication efforts, understanding scale within the operating environment is critical. Likewise, awareness of variables that are dependent or independent of messages used to perturb the system produces relevant knowledge about messages that are resonating, misunderstood, or have produced unintended results.

Additionally, it is important to understand that evolution and emergence are not synonymous. On the surface, evolution is a process that occurs within a particular level, most often in reference with the Darwinian belief of natural selection. Bar-Yam believes that evolution

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[36] Yaneer Bar-Yam, *Making Things Work*, 33.

[37] Ibid., 67

[38] Ibid., 92

[39] Ibid., 92

[40] Ibid., 100

is a "framework for thinking about success and failure that is not based on specific values or opinions about good and bad;" rather, "cooperation and competition and how each must act together."[41] In this, latter interpretation, Bar-Yam provides a useful way of describing nature and society. He also identifies the relevance of understanding the environment and the evolving population operating within it in reference to strategic communication.

Alex Ryan discusses the difficulty in defining emergence, when he describes it as, "an essential pillar of every systems approach, and yet no precise, well defined account of emergence has achieved any level of consensus among systems researchers."[42] In his 2007 article titled "Emergence is Coupled to Scope, Not Level," he separates emergent properties from emergence. He defines emergent properties as a "feature of a system" and emergence as "a process whereby novel emergent properties are created."[43]

Steven Johnson, author of *Emergence: The connected life of ants, brains, cities, and software,* takes an alternative view. Counter to Ryan's argument, he defines emergence as the "movement from low-level rules to higher-level sophistication."[44] Ryan contends emergence is based on scope; whereas, Johnson argues it is a matter of level. Johnson contends that until "local

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[41] Ibid., 77

[42] Alex Ryan, "Emergence is Coupled to Scope, Not Level," Defense Science and Technology Organization, Wiley Periodicals (June 2007):67-77, http://arxiv.org/PS_cache/nlin/pdf/0609/0609011v1.pdf (accessed on March 2, 2009).

[43] Alex Ryan, "Emergence is Coupled to Scope, Not Level," 68. Ryan states in his study, "We found that the concept is currently too broad. Weak emergent properties must be excluded from emergence: the resolution of observation or the language of description has no bearing on whether a property is emergent. Emergent behavior, or environmental emergence, must be reassessed as a novel emergent property of a system with larger scope. A clear distinction was made between emergent properties and emergence, which shows that simply scaling an emergent property cannot be considered emergence."

[44] Steven Johnson, *Emergence: The Connected Lives of Ants, Brains, Cities, and Software* (New York, NY: Scribner, 2001), 18.

interactions resulted in some form of discernible macro behavior" emergence does not exist.[45] Ryan agrees and describes this as a weak emergent property separate from emergence. In both respects, Ryan and Johnson communicate the importance of emergent properties and emergence. The author's work explains emergence theory in the context that it proves relevant to understanding strategic communication as a non-linear process (sender-receiver) that produces emergent behavior.

According to complexity theorist, Yaneer Bar-Yam, interdependence means *"something happening in one place in the world can, and often does, affect things happening in another place, even in many different places around the world."[46]* Some theorists refer to this phenomenon as the "butterfly effect."[47] Similarly, Robert Jervis explains that the "how" and "why" systems become consistent is due to their interconnectedness or interdependence. He states— *"the relations between two actors are often determined less by their common and conflicting bilateral interests then by their relations with other actors, which means that a shift in stance sets off a chain of consequences."[48]* Put in a political context, any shift in foreign policy, strategic communication, or emergence of new dangers or opportunities may affect the strength of alliances or one nation's position in the international political landscape. Certainly, this is reductionist in nature, yet proves useful for constructing the argument. In this regard, the

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[45] Ibid.,19

[46] Yaneer Bar-Yam, *Making Things Work*, 61.

[47] Larry Bradley, " The Butterfly Effect," (2009), http://www.pha.jhu.edu/~ldb/seminar/butterfly.html (accessed on March 2, 2009).

[48] Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 211.

transmission of information and use of cybernetics rather than physical acts serves as a potential to change the propensity of the system.[49]

Non-linearity means an output is not directly proportional to the input.[50] Thus, small changes in the input have the potential to create seismic changes in the output.[51] Some refer to these changes as "perturbations in the system." Alex Beyerchen, professor of History at the University of Ohio, recently published an article titled "Clausewitz, Non-Linearity, and the Importance of Imagery." The article provides context to linear and non-linear thinking and the use of metaphors to describe new ideas emerging from new sciences. Beyerchen states— "linearity offers structural stability and [places] emphasis on equilibrium."[52] Conversely, he implies that nonlinearity places emphasis on adaptability and unpredictability with associated impacts on issue of risk.

Many interactions that occur in the international political system are non-linear. This is evidenced via the use of senior leader rhetoric, diplomatic or military actions to invoke a

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[49] Ibid., 145

[50] Linda P. Beckerman, "The Non-Linear Dynamics of War," (April 1999), http://www.calresco.org/beckermn/nonlindy.htm (accessed on February 14, 2009).

[51] Potential is described by Francois Juilen in Chapter 2: Relying on the Propensity of Things in *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking*. Julien states that there are two notions at the heart of Chinese strategy which form a pair—"the notion of situation or configuration (xing), as it develops and takes shape before our eyes (as a relation of forces); on the other hand, and counterbalancing this, the notion of potential (shi[a]), which is implied by that situation and can be made to play in one's favor"(17). This is often described by a mountain stream moving boulders. In this case, the rushing stream is thought to possess potential. In relation to strategic communication and diplomacy, these two Chinese notions help the strategic communicator evaluate the situation and understand that potential is circumstantial (22). Thus, one that is able to constantly adapt to another actor within the system one is able to increase power and eventually manipulate at one's will (25). Likewise, to "manage things, [one] must establish the potential of the situation" (26). In politics and social constructs, the position of authority, serves as the potential. Thus, shifts in behaviors within the system are a result of one's position, not from oneself (27).

behavioral shift in friends, allies, and adversaries or observed by non-state actors' methods of international terrorism and suicide bombings to alter the stability of the system. Both are non-linear and have the potential to send shockwaves throughout the international community. Author, Nassim N. Taleb, of *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable* claim that large consequences are unforecasted because there has been no precedent where information could be gleaned in order to mitigate risk.[53] This is often seen in the wake of a catastrophe or unforeseen event, where societal pressures tend to force government leadership to explain these unforseen events in hindsight. Thus, in the Black Swan Theory, the "black swan" serves as a metaphor for something that could not be accounted for due to limited human knowledge.

Like the Pragmatic Complexity Model that asserts control is impossible, Black Swan theory claims that prediction of such events is impossible, yet occur more than humans would like to admit. Thus, Taleb's thesis is based on building capability to minimize negative outcomes, while capitalizing and reinforcing successful occurences. Differentiating between White Swans and Black Swans (positive or negative events) proves futile given the complex interrelationships that exist within an environment. Taleb contends there is no way of determining a cause and effect relationship because one cannot determine which events produce which effects. In terms of strategic communication this theory demonstrates relevance for how to approach the global information environment in the face of uncertainty.

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[52] Alan D. Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Importance of Imagery," http://www.clausewitz.com/CWZHOME/Beyerchen/BeyerschenNonlinearity2.pdf (accessed on March 2, 2009).

[53] Nassim Nicholas Taleb, *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable* (New York: Random House, 2007) 23-25.

According to Senge, there are two types of cybernetic feedback processes: reinforcing and balancing.[54] Reinforcing pertains to processes which are growth oriented; whereas, balancing pertains more towards goal-oriented behavior. Regarding Senge's thoughts on systems thinking, it is important to understand the value and utility in the system one is operating in order to gain a better understanding of how it works. In reinforcing feedback processes, small changes build on itself. Other theorists describe positive feedback as one that responds to perturbation in the same direction as the perturbation. Thus, its about provoking a response and one's reaction most likely will set the tone and actions to follow. In contrast, a system, which responds to the *perturbateur* in a manner counter to that predicted, or a negative feedback system, keeps the system operating within a band of tolerance.[55] The diagram below graphically depicts the broad spectrum pertaining to growth (Positive Feedback) and that of maintaining equilibrium or remaining in a state of tolerance as demonstrated by (Negative Feedback).
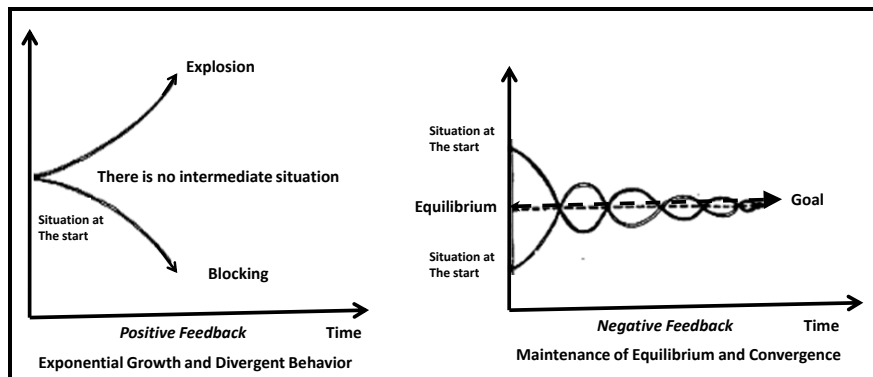

Figure 1 Positive and Negative Feedback[56]

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[54] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 79.

[55] Band of Tolerance is a phrase used to describe the leeway for managing a complex problem within political bounds (See definition in glossary).

[56] J. de Rosnay, "Principia Cybernetica Web," (January 1997), http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/FEEDBACK.html (accessed on February 17, 2009).

In the international political environment, balancing feedback processes may be seen in the forms of international organizations such as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In this context, these organizations serve as collective stakeholders at multiple levels that are used to manage complex problems (See Figure 1 Positive and Negative Feedback) and keeps the international system within a normalized operating band. Thus, in the context of strategic communication, the importance of integrating cybernetics into messaging channels facilitates timely feedback. This feedback informs which contingency messages should be sent to either reinforce success or mitigate negative tensions and sentiments fostered in the wake of a message. Having a capability that provides timely feedback to the resonance or dissonance of messaging amongst a targeted population, as seen in the likes of former USIA cadre is a capability desperately needed in today's 21st century GIE.

When seeking to find a communication model suited to account for complexity in the 21st century GIE, one must select a model that will provide timely feedback. The model should also contain multiple feedback loops identifying both positive and negative effects. The quicker the information is received the faster it can be determined whether a message is having the intended effect. One should test this new communication model against the current global economic crisis, as well as, against terrorist propaganda activities to determine its viability to shift behaviors and to generate contingencies based on the use of cybernetics. Arguably, attempting to stabilize the global economic crisis via a compilation of words and actions proves more challenging and more of a threat today than countering terrorist propaganda efforts.

The solution is not to be found in some slick PR campaign or by trying to out-propagandize al-Qaeda, but rather through the steady accumulation of actions and results that build trust and credibility over time.[57]

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates

Defense Secretary Robert Gates cautions taking a pure public relations approach to countering ideological threats and trying to sway foreign sentiments. In order to shift the propensity of current US public diplomacy efforts, Gates advocates "having civilian institutions of diplomacy and development that are adequately staffed and properly funded."[58] Over the past two years, Defense Secretary Gates has argued for "strengthening other important elements of national power both institutionally and financially, and creat[ing] the capability to integrate and apply all elements of national power to problems and challenges abroad."[59] To further support the recapitalization of State, Gates argues that:

America's civilian institutions of diplomacy and development have been chronically undermanned and underfunded for far too long—relative to what we spend on the military, and more important, relative to the responsibilities and challenges our nation has around the world. I cannot pretend to know the right dollar amount—I know it's a good deal more than the one percent of the federal budget that is right now.[60]

Gates proceeds to compares the disparity between Defense Department's buget and that of State. He adds that Defense's budget idles at nearly $500 billion dollars, or approximately 4% GDP, while State Departments budge equates to roughly $36 billion or less than 1% of GDP.[61]

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[57] Robert M. Gates, "U.S. Global Leadership Campaign ," U.S. Department of Defense website, (July 2008), http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1262 (accessed January 30, 2009).

[58] Robert M. Gates, 2008.

[59] Robert M. Gates, 2007.

[60] Robert M. Gates, 2008.

[61] Robert M. Gates, 2007.

He likens the paltry financial resources State Department has at its disposal to that of what the Defense Department allocates for health care expenses.

Gates continues to elevate the importance of public diplomacy and strategic communication efforts as a means to harness these tools of statecraft across multiple "cylinders of excellence"—defense, international partners, and non-governmental organizations. He notes the paradigm shift that has occurred under his watch—a shift away from predominantly kinetic action to one that searches for new capabilities to shape the emerging security environment in order to prevent future military actions.

One only need to revisit the decisions made in the 1990s to witness the annihilation of one of the most extensively and successfully used capabilities arguably contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union during the Cold War—"soft power."[62] The reduction of permanent staff of USAID (over 15,000 during Vietnam to that of 3,000 in the 90s) and the dismantlement of the USIA sheds light on the erosion of such a capability.[63] Gates does not advocate the recreation of the USIA nor simply increasing the staffing within civilian institutions; however, he contends "new institutions need new 21st century mind-sets."[64] John Nagl, Senior Fellow at the Center for a New American Security and retired Army officer, joins Gates in the call for increasing civilian capacity in the information age; however suggests a reestablishment of a USIA. He states—

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[62] Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power : The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 6.

[63] Robert M. Gates, 2007.

[64] Robert M. Gates, 2007.

This is the task of a new generation of information warriors, development experts, and diplomats; it is every bit as important as the fight being waged by our men and women in uniform, but nowhere near as well recognized and funded.[65]

Richard Halloran, a twenty year veteran foreign and military correspondent for the New York Times, in 2007 states that one of the fundamental problems with strategic communication today is the lack of a common definition across the whole-of-government. He traces the meaning of strategic communication back to propaganda used in WWI and WWII and explains that crafting a message remained critical and the added complexity involved when it passes through multiple audiences.

Dennis Murphy makes clear in his works that USG strategic communication efforts, if performed effectively and efficiently, may portray the nation as one in touch with its people and is striving to help its citizens; however, opposite perceptions may also be prevalent if strategic communication remains an afterthought, and developed in isolation. Given today's complex 21st Century GIE, the government nor the military will be able to dominate this environment according to Murphy. Thus, managing domestic and foreign expectations within a tolerable band is necessary.

According to Richard Josten, strategic communication was both message and action and served as the functioning mechanism to harness the Elements of National Power in a synchronized and efficient manner.[66] Given this logic, Josten asserts that strategic communication must be "driven by policy from the White House, the NSC, DOS, DOD and other interagency

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[65] John Nagl, "The Expeditionary Imperative: America's national security structure is designed to confront the challenges of the last century rather than our own," The Wilson Quarterly (Winter 2009): 58.

[66] Richard J. Josten, "Strategic Communication: Key Enabler for Elements of National Power," IOSPHERE (Summer 2006):16.

organizations."[67] The genesis of the problem, according to him, stems from a lack of long-term planning and coordination between agencies and a synchronized release of messages and actions. He emphasizes that the key USG strategic communicator is the President and his cabinet. Yet, he contends the issue with attempting to create such an architecture is plagued by the implicit—the intra-governmental bureaucracy, competing turf, and conflicting agendas.

In 2008, several white papers advanced the debate over the importance of strategic communication and public diplomacy efforts, countering ideological support to terrorism, and competing in the 21st century GIE with 'new media.' Most notably, Steve Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., founding members of the CSC, published *Weapons of Mass Persuasion: Strategic Communication to Combat Violent Extremism*. Within this book is their white paper titled—"A 21st Century Model for Communication in the Global War of Ideas: From Simplistic Influence to Pragmatic Complexity." This piece depicts why current public diplomacy and communication efforts are failing in the war of extremist ideas. The authors, suggest a plausible approach through the Pragmatic Complexity Model (PCOM) as how to reengage in this evolving information environment.

Within their research, Corman views the war of ideas as "*a clash of systems and cultures of communication that are themselves firmly rooted in diverse religious, economic, and social conditions.*"[68] What's more, Corman claims that the "war of ideas" will not be won by military action alone; but, must be won "rhetorically and narratively in the hearts and minds of those on all sides of the ideological front."[69] Moreover, he fully understands that there will be

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, x.

[69] Ibid.

irreconcilables and thus should not be considered as the target audience for strategic communication messages; however, efforts should be tailored to reaching the "fence sitters" who may be already subjected to the adversary's ideological message.[70]

Weapons of Mass Persuasion, a primary resource published by Corman, Trethewey, and Goodall identify two trends that warrant alarm for increased efforts regarding strategic communication. The first trend is external in nature—the rise of international terrorism, suicide bombings and the spread of extremist ideologies; while the second pertains to Americas' marred image and declining support from abroad. [71] Within his section titled— Failures to Communicate: Four Missed Opportunities, he raises the issue that the Bush administration's approaches regarding public diplomacy and counter-terrorism efforts largely have been modeled after public relations and advertising campaign strategies. The point he makes explicit is that the USG can not expect to "sell complex concepts such as freedom, democracy, equality, or even the idea of America" using Western logic.[72] It appears America's rush for elections and their belief that holding elections equates to democracy only exacerbates the situation.

Corman continues his rationale for embracing the idea of a complex systems approach when viewing the communication process within encompassing audiences, culture and meaning.[73] Thus, what appears lacking in the GWOT is the ability to make sense of the ongoing ideological struggle given the disparate views on issues that span history to modern politics and everything in between. In this light, one may view communication as "an ongoing narrative

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[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 1-2

[72] Ibid., 5

[73] Ibid., 6

process of sense making" as Corman offers.[74] In fact, if one accepts his argument than one realizes that any information added within the debate is far from neutral. Corman states, "All messages are partial, partisan, and problematic because the information contained within them is always rich with cultural and political interpretation and perspective."[75] Hence, once a message is transmitted they take on a life of their own and may no longer be controlled. Like many scholars who have added to this debate, most recognize that the message and audience are merely a component of something much bigger. Most interestingly, Corman asserts that the true challenge is not about developing the right message or audience as once thought, instead it is searching for—

> *Better ways of organizing resources at all levels of culture, language, and strategy capable of influencing how messages are likely to be received and interpreted in an ever-changing and evolving, complex and meaning-centered narrative world.*[76]

Another section within his work that proves useful for the next presidential administration is titled— Soundbite Strategery: The Need for a New Vocabulary. It is here that he makes one of his strongest points and is included as a recommendation for President Obama's administration to remedy immediately upon taking office—renaming the War on Terror. Like Corman, Goodall, and Trethewey, wars on nouns and "isms" are doomed to fail. They argue, "You cannot defeat that which cannot be properly named."[77] From a strategic communication perspective, trying to sell an idea with "war" in the title makes gaining buy-in all that more difficult, while most likely eroding support along the way. Similarly, one could make the same

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[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid., 7

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid., 10

case for adding "Bailout" to the title of the 2008 economic crisis, only further inflames the passion of the people regarding wasteful spending and rewarding those individuals and firms that operated under the guise of unsound economic models and risky practices.

Another section within this book that explains the depth of the issue as to why the USG is largely ineffective in countering terrorist ideology titled— Beating Us at Our Own Game: Failure to Counter Terrorists' Propaganda. Corman, Goodall and Trethewey, like many researchers on this subject, raise the fact that the country lacks a credible message and messenger, largely as the cause for lacking competitiveness in this information domain.[78] They contend that two reasons for failing to communicate effectively in public diplomacy is attributed to the use of an out-dated myopic communication model and an inability to counter terrorist propaganda in a timely manner. The new approach according to the report stresses the importance of "message analysis, coordination, and alignment" among various [entities] responsible for transmitting information via press release, video, speech, etc.[79]

Steven Corman and Jill Schiefelbein, argue in the "Communication and Media Strategy in the Islamist War of Ideas," that Islamists' ability to use 'new media' to advance their goals of expanding the Islamic Caliphate and expelling infidels from the Arabian Peninsula are largely being transmitted without any retribution or counter narrative. Thomas Friedman, describes this ideological struggle and the use of new technology in a similar manner in the section Infosys versus Al-Qaeda in *The World is Flat.* He states that there are "countless examples of how terrorists use this uncensored medium [internet] to spread disinformation, to deliver threats

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[78] Ibid., 16

[79] Ibid., 29

intended to instill fear and helplessness, and to disseminate horrific images of recent actions."[80] Moreover, Friedman explains that in what he describes a "flat world" it is now harder to hide; yet, easier to get connected.[81]

A Professor of Information Operations and Information in Warfare from the U.S. Army War College, (USAWC), Dennis M. Murphy, additionally has added to this debate with his latest work, "Fighting Back: New Media and Military Operations." He adds to the scholarly research on the ever-changing landscape of the global information environment and the leveling effect communication technology is having on state, non-state actors and everyone in between. His argument is very similar to Thomas Friedman's—flattening effect of globalization on Third-World countries. Murphy defines 'new media' "as any capability that empowers a broad range of actors to create and disseminate near-real time or real time information with the ability to affect a broad audience."[82] If the USG hopes to become competitive in this systemic environment it must understand existing opportunities and impediments that are present today and emergent challenges that may exist in the future. When one considers the power of 'new media' today, one's ability to access, receive and transmit information is beyond the scope of what one could imagine at the beginning of the century.

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[80] Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 433.

[81] Ibid., 36

[82] Dennis M. Murphy, "Fighting Back: New Media and Military Operations," (USAWC, November 2008): 4.

Communication Models

The issue is not that we lack information about the world; it is that we need better schemata. We do not know enough about the new sciences to apply them very well yet, but every attempt helps us learn and adapt to the changes which we must cope.[83]
-Murray Gell-Mann

Murray Gell-Mann's words are profound and clearly articulate the need for a paradigm shift in how the USG structures its information and communication apparatuses for the 21st century. New schemata is exactly what is needed—a shift from 20th century linear communication models to a systems mindset better suited for critically thinking about the information environment in which states and non-state actors now compete. In this context, this paper is positioned at the crossroads of information strategy, political and social sciences, communication systems and complexity theory. The overarching goal is to present a "systems thinking" approach with "communication pragmatics" and the theory of "perturbation" to explain successes and failures of strategic communication and to test it against two Presidential administrations starting at the beginning of the 20th and 21st century. Ultimately, the intent is to further the debate on overhauling the current strategic communication model with the *Pragmatic Complexity Model* developed by Steven Corman, Angela Trethewey and Bud Goodall in April 2007.

The general propositions asserted in this monograph are timeless; yet, are restricted due to social and psychological factors which cannot be accounted for when making broad generalizations spanning two Presidential administrations in two separate centuries. This work is not prescriptive; however, conclusions drawn from the analysis may serve useful for policy

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[83] "The Nobel Foundation," (2007), http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/physics/laureates/1969/gell-mann-bio.html (accessed on February 10, 2009).

makers seeking to improve how the USG uses strategic communication to improve national

image and counter opposing ideiological threats.

Before explaining the usefulness of the Pragmatic Complexity Model (PCOM) and its

benefits for advancing strategic communication efforts more effectively, it is best to briefly

explain the evolution of several communication models beginning with the *Aristotle Model* often
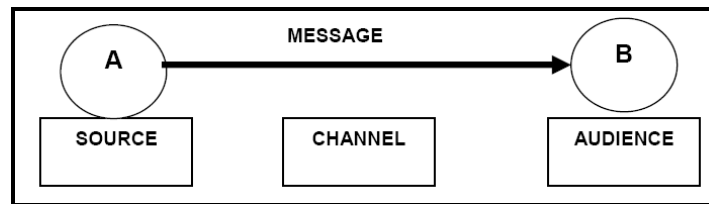
described as a Message-Influence Model.

Figure 2 Message-Influence Model[84]

Commander Steve Tatham, UK Naval officer, in "Strategic Communication: A Primer,"

describes this model as the simplest model for communication between two parties that "assumes

no outside interference or conditioning of the intended audience (B)."[85] Moreover, it assumes that

the message sent to audience (B) will be successful. In orther words, the message will be

interpreted in a manner that will achieve the desired intent unless there is some interference in the

transmission. Like Tatham, Corman and his colleagues argue this model does not account for the

levels of complexity present in any information environment, especially those that occur on a

global stage.

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[84] Steve A. Tatham, CDR, "Strategic Communication: A Primer,"(Shrivenham, England: Defence Academy of the UK, December 2008), 7.

[85] Ibid.

In 1949, Claude Shannon, an engineer for the Bell Telephone Company, designed arguably the most influential communication model that spanned over half of a century and arguably has remained in effect well past its prime.[86] Initially this model was used to facilitate engineers conceptualization of transmitting electrical signals between two points. After multiple iterations, Shannon concluded there needed to be a mechanism or transmitter in the receiver thatwould correct any disparities occurring between incoming and outgoing signals. Many scientists today refer to this model as the origination for the concept of feedback.
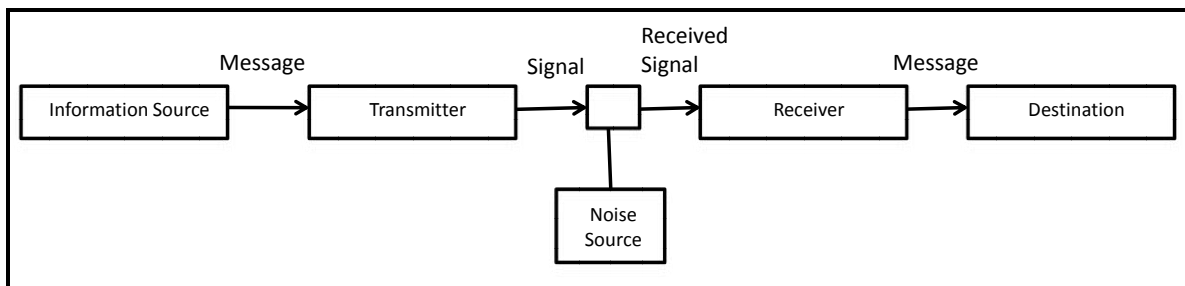

Figure 3 Shannon-Weaver Model[87]

Though the *Shannon and Weaver Model* possessed elements that helped advance communication research, the most obvious shortcoming of the model was its relatively static and linear state. Corman highlights the "analogy comparing human communication to transmission of messages over a telephone system."[88] Moreover, the model assumes that the transmitter will basically serve as the central decoding station for outbound and inbound communication traffic.

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[86] C. David Mortensen, *Communication: The Study of Human Communication* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1972), Chapter 2, "Communication Models, " http://www.shkaminski.com/Classes/Handouts/Communication%20Models.htm (accessed on February 15, 2009).

[87] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and Bud Goodall, "A 21st Century Model for Communication in the Global War of Ideas," Consortium for Strategic Communication (Arizona State University, 2007), 4.

Unfortunately, its linearity and suggestion that messages sent equal messages received no longer prove a useful construct when evaluating the complex information age of the 21st century.

David Berlo's Source-*Message-Channel-Receiver (SMCR) Model* applies the Shannon and Weaver Model to human communication. The model was constructed in 1960 and was significant for its acknowledgement that there were many sources such as oral, written and electronic forms that could be used to generate a message. Central to his premise was the recognition that the message served as the transmission of ideas and was a source embedded in a form of physical behavior. The channel served as a medium through which a message was sent. The model depicted the importance of the receivers (person or groups of people) and made explicit the need to understand social-cultural and behavioral traits in context to their environment. Specifically, where one was attempting to transmit a message.

Weaknesses identified with the Berlo Model centered on the potential to manipulate message through the encoding and decoding process, the assumption that human communication was equal to machine communication, and that if problems did arise they could be solved through "technical accuracy—by choosing the "right" symbols, preventing interference, and sending efficient messages."[89]

Though, Berlo's Model represents a linear message-influence model it did demonstrate an iterative progression and understanding of the many influences shaping the receiver. However,

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[88] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr.,*Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 153.

[89] C. David Mortensen, *Communication: The Study of Human Communication* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1972), Chapter 2, "Communication Models," http://www.shkaminski.com/Classes/Handouts/Communication%20Models.htm (accessed on February 15, 2009).

the model still was structured to represent that communication sent would achieve the intended consequences unless there was a bad connection. What appears absent in these models is the ability to account for complexity through non-linear processes where both the senders and receivers are adapting to the environment. Corman and his colleagues identify this as one of the core faults with linear message-influence models. The assumption that the environment remains in a steady state or is not evolving severely weakens the argument for linear communication models.
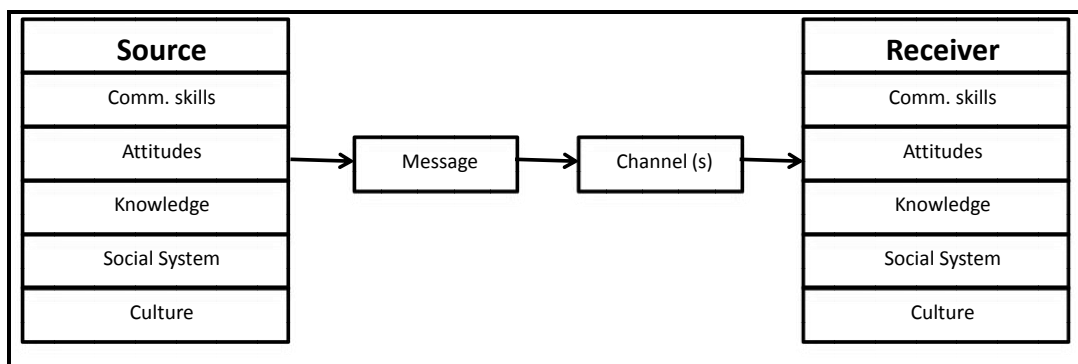
Figure 4 Berlo's Communication Model (S-M-C-R) [90]

Before explaining the logic of the Pragmatic Complexity Model one should explore *Barnlund's 1970 Transactional Model*. At this point in time, this model represented the most systematic of the functional communication models. The most distinct feature about Barnlund's model is its non-linearity and interaction between individuals and their environment. Additionally, the use of spirals serving as functions provides a graphical representation to the evolving nature of the environment and those operating within it. Certainly, this was a shift from conventional thought, where linearity ruled the day.

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[90] Liang Chen, "Architectural Visualization: An Analysis from Human Visual Cognition Process," (Art & Design, Monash University, 2004), 6.

This model acknowledges that communication is a fragile process evolving from the connection of two individuals or audiences into a relationship, which totals more than the sum of its parts. Moreover, the model also recognizes the potential behavior has on altering the communication process. This model sees human communication as much more than a bridge where messages transit to and from unaltered by the conditions in which it passes. Barnlund's Transactional Model serves as the springboard for viewing communication as a systemic, process-oriented, meaning-created fusion, between the invested parties. Certainly, this model demonstrates a more asymmetrical way of visualizing the information environment; however, the weakness with the model stems from its assumption that communication describes the evolution of meaning. Put another way, "the model presupposes that the terms communication and meaning are synonymous."[91]
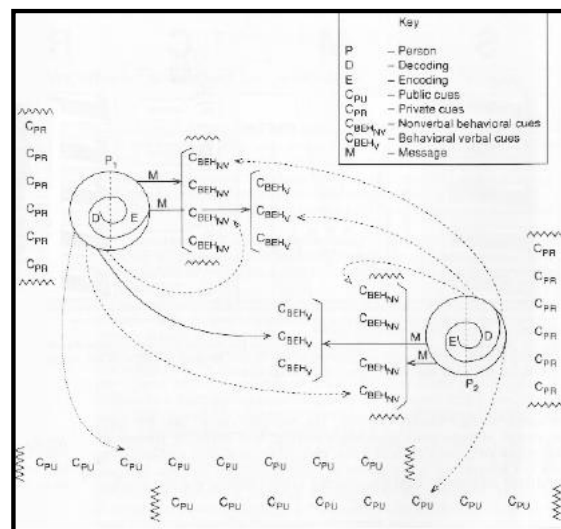

Figure 5 Barnlund's Transaction Model[92]

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[91] C. David Mortensen, *Communication: The Study of Human Communication* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1972), Chapter 2, "Communication Models," http://www.shkaminski.com/Classes/Handouts/Communication%20Models.htm (accessed on February 15, 2009).

[92] Ibid.

Certainly, this can lead to confusion, miscommunication and ultimately misinterpretation. This would prove costly when attempting to construct a narrative to counter opposing ideologies in today's global "war of ideas."

This leads us to the model of choice, the *Pragmatic Complexity Model*, which suggests among other things that engagement narratives serve to gain buy-in from those that hold opposing views. Corman, Tretheway and Goodall describe in their white paper that one of the challenges that exist for leaders is finding a way to communicate with people that are borderline radical in their passion towards their beliefs. Moreover, assert that there are no "fence-sitters" or "neutrals" within this environment. The evolving nature of both receivers and senders highlights their mutual interdependence within the larger system as depicted above in Barnlund's model. Thus, a systems perspective proves valuable when analyzing the global information environment. Within this perspective are two important theories—Communication Pragmatics and the Theory of Perturbation.

Theory of Communication Pragmatics

An explanation of The theory of Communication Pragmatics may be found by the late Paul Watzlawick, who stated –

> *Relationships within a family system are interconnected and highly resistant to change. Communication among members has both a content and relationship component. The system can be transformed only when members receive outside help to reframe the relational punctuation.*[93]

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[93] P. Watzlawick, Beavin J., and Jackson, D., *Pragmatics of Human Communication* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967), 494.

Key to this passage is the explicit mention of content and relationship components that are necessary in a communication model. Watzlawick asserts that when content and relationship elements do not align, miscommunication is likely to occur. For this reason, the logic to his theory is dependent on the context of the situation.

Since each situation is unique, there appear multiple interpretations and truths. Though the theory based upon scientific criteria, the theory caters more to free will. Given this understanding, the model proves difficult to measure analytically. However, its axioms serve to support the theory but are not the sole basis for it. Thus, it was important to understand the theory behind Communication Pragmatics before discussing the Theory of Perturbation.

Theory of Perturbation

The Theory of Perturbation traced back to naval theorist, Admiral Raoul Victor Patrice Castex in the *Classics of Sea Power*. He describes this phenomenon as—

> *One flouring nation, bounding with energy and thirsting with ambition, hopes to dominate all. Its essential characteristic is youth, vitality, and the possession of an untapped storehouse of human energy, and this characteristic explains everything because it implies brilliant activity in every direction. The perturbateur, powerful in manpower, in resources, in policy, and in arms, overtly manifests the intention of absorbing and erasing its neighbors.[94]*

Certainly, this passage conjures a hegemonic power in pursuit of national aims. As Castex explains, every century has witnessed a struggle against one aggressor only to see the rise of another. Reviewing the theory of perturbation proves timely to understanding the dilemma heads of state have faced through the centuries pertaining to global ideological struggles. In the

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[94] Raoul Castex, ADM. *Strategic Theories* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 404.

twentieth century, the world saw rise to fascism and communism; whereas, in the 21st century one now sees the rise of a radical Islamic fundamentalist ideology.

Castex helps weave what known today as international relations theory with communication theory to demonstrate the perpetual evolving nature of the international political system. Given this rotation of rise and fall of hegemons, "yesterday's *perturbateur* is often called upon to fight todays or tomorrows."[95] Of course, in the nature of foreign policy, the perturbateur intervenes quite frequently in the domestic affairs of other nations through proxy forces in line with one's aims under the guise of religious, political or social ideal.[96] Castex asserts in every case, the supported party serves as the logical link between fanaticism, nationalism, imperialism, and militarism.[97] Though diplomacy may not be the perturbateur's forte, it should be noted that its purpose was not to gain acceptance or influence of receivers rather alter the propensity of the communication system. It is this point where the PCOM separates itself from all other communication models.

Pragmatic Complexity Model

The *first* implication of the PCOM focuses on deemphasizing the Western way of communicating via controlling the message and focuses on embracing complexity through the concept of strategic engagement.[98] The logic behind this communication model is that context matters—interpretation and attribution of the actions of system members. Like Barnlund's

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[95] Ibid., 406

[96] Ibid., 413

[97] Ibid., 416

[98] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 57.

Transactional Communication Model, the PCOM acknowledges communication occurs in a complex system controlled by no one. This serves as the model's first principle—control is impossible. Once complexity better understood through a systems mindset one will start to look for opportunities in situations of uncertainty as described by Corman.

The *second* premise of the PCOM is the acknowledgement that repetition of message no longer proves a successful strategy in the complex communication system. In fact, the underlying logic of this model suggests the need for variation, selection, and retention of message. This acknowledgement serves as the model's second principle—less is more. Corman explains that the sender must be agile to correct existing messages at the first sign the message is failing in order to provoke the intended shift in behavior within the social system. Corman refers to Robert Jervis "double contingency" that describes the constraints as dependent on external conditions and understanding that both parties are joined in a "relationship of simultaneous, mutual interdependence."[99]

Third, while variation may contribute to shifts in the propensity of the system; transformative change most likely emerges only when a system is perturbed by some unforeseen act that moves the system out of a state of tolerance. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on US soil and the ongoing full-spectrum military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq each respectively perturbed the international relations systems respectively. This example explains the third principle of the PCOM—perturb stable system structures in order to provoke a transformative change.[100]

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[99] Ibid., 10

[100] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., "A 21st Century Model for Communication in the Global War of Ideas," 13.

Fourth, the PCOM model is not a predictive tool; yet, one that proves useful from a contingency planning standpoint. Thus, strategic communication and diplomacy practitioners should focus more on what happens if the message fails to achieve the desired effect than assume the message will reach its intended audience and understood.[101] Unlike other communication models, the PCOM expects failure of message. This acknowledgement is refreshing and insightful for it facilitates a new way of looking at the system. In essence, it makes strategic communicators think past the initial engagement and more in terms of contingency planning.[102] What this facilitates is a shift from linear thinking to that of systemic.
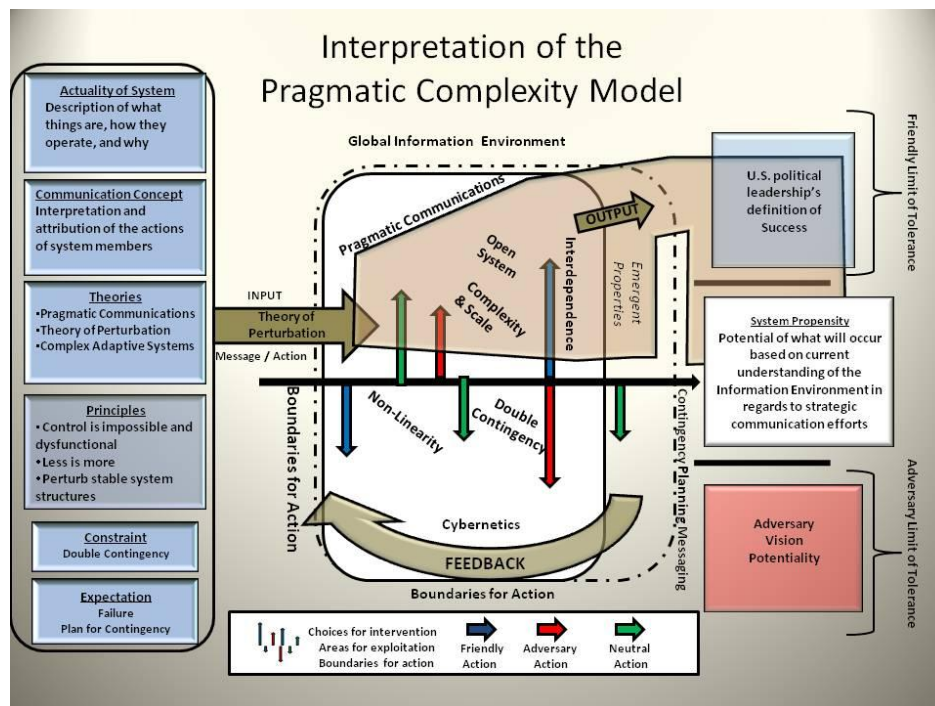
Figure 6 An Interpretation of the Pragmatic Complexity Model[103]

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[101] Ibid., 14

[102] Ibid.

[103] Text used in model is from Table 2 of Corman, Steven R., Angela Trethewey, and Bud Goodall, "A 21st Century Model for Communication in the Global War of Ideas," white paper found within *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 162.

The graphic depiction of the Pragmatic Complexity Model was created to better explain Corman, Tretheway, and Goodall's communication concept. On the left side of the model are a list of theories, principles, and key references made explicit in their white paper describing the Pragmatic Complexity Model. Text boxes on the right side of the model depict both friendly and opposition's limits of tolerance regarding operating in the global information environment. Implicit within these bands are each actor's desires to make the current information environment more favorable to their objectives or at a minimum maintain the current propensity of the system (depicted by the black arrow). Though the arrow appears linear it is meant only to represent the understanding that the system propensity is equal to the tendency or inclination of actors interacting within the system. Thus, when an input enters the system as the Theory of Perturbation describes, a shock to the system occurs changing the dynamics of the system.

Similarly, complexity theorists, Robert Jervis describes changes within the system occur due to the interdependent relationships between actors operating in the system. He refers to these tensions as a "double-contingency."[104] Effects from actions that perturb the system, as well as, from tensions mounting may produce emergent properties and produce non-linear results. That means an output does not produce a proportionate reaction to the input. In the context of the Pragmatic Complexity Model where failure is the expectation, having feedback mechanisms to inform strategic communicators of these positive or negative reactions help to reinforce success and prepare contingencies for those that fail.

The next section builds and tests the Pragmatic Complexity Model and the theories of Communication Pragmatics and Perturbation to investigate how two Presidents at the beginning

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[104] Robert Jervis, *System Effects*, 256.

of the 20th and 21st centuries respectively used narratives and new technology to effectively communicate to international and domestic audiences.

ANALYSIS

This section analyzes two Presidents of the United States (POTUS), one representing the beginning of the 20th century during the Industrial Revolution (Theodore Roosevelt); and one representing the beginning of the 21st century in the Information Revolution (Barak Obama). More specifically, this section attempts to look at how each President viewed their GIE and his role in it, and how each embraced emerging technology to conduct strategic communication.

Common themes espoused throughout this analysis are in line with the Pragmatic Complexity Model (PCOM), which suggests in theory actions taken by systems members remain subject to interpretation by other members and the expectation is failure rather than success. Moreover, indicative of the model is the realization that control of message is impossible, less is more, and what desired is not persuasion or influence rather a "shock" to the system structures as the Theory of Perturbation proclaims.

Contrast to linear influence models of the past, a systemic understanding of the environment coupled with cybernetics better assists leaders in their ability to reduce complexity in order to manage a crisis within a band of tolerance. Throughout the analysis, technological innovations will transform how societies communicate, thus allowing leaders the capability of reaching multiple audiences further and faster than ever before. However, as author Hans M. Enzenberger, stated roughly a decade ago, that the nature of warfare was evolving from "purposive, ideologically driven enterprises undertaken by highly organized industrial powers" to

what he terms, "molecular civil war."[105] In this environment, "loose cellular networks of fighters

operate trans-nationally and in dense urban environments, exploiting modern communications

technologies … to coordinate activities and magnify the symbolic effect of attacks."[106] Without

question, America, regardless of century remains engaged in a "war of ideas." The only variable

that appears to change is the opponent.

> *It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.[107]*

> *Theodore Roosevelt "Citizenship in a Republic"*
> *Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris, April 23, 1910.*

President Theodore Roosevelt

Scholars at times argue that President Theodore Roosevelt (TR) served the nation in a

time of relative tranquility rather in a time of crisis. Though this may be true, crisis remains to

interpretation, what remains undisputed is the number of problems beginning to emerge from

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[105] Timothy L. Thomas, "Cyber Mobilization: A Growing Counterinsurgency Campaign," IO Sphere, Summer 2006, pg. 27.

[106] Colin H. Kahl, "COIN of the Realm –Is There a Future for Counterinsurgency?," (Foreign Affairs, Council on Foreign Relations, November-December 2007).

[107] "Theodore Roosevelt Association," In his Own Words: Life of Theodore Roosevelt, under "Man in the Arena" http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/quotes.htm (accessed on February 1, 2009).

industrialization to overseas acquisitions vastly adding to the complexity of his administration.[108]

Certainly, challenging for a former Vice President following the assassination of President

McKinley in September 1901, where unexpectedly he found himself thrust into the arena—under

the microscope of the international community.

Before we begin describing the GIE of the early 20th century in order to analyze TR's use

of strategic communication, it is best to first gain an appreciation for TR and his vision for USG's

role at home and America's role in international affairs. Most notably, TR represented what

Samuel Huntington would later coin a "Soldier and Statesman."[109] TR served as a Colonel during

the Spanish-American War commanding the 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry Regiment

known as the "Rough Riders" and a century later posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for

his actions at the Battle of San Juan Hill. As a statesman, TR distinguished himself globally for

his leadership in brokering a peace settlement to end the Russo-Japanese War at the Portsmouth

Conference, for his actions, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906.

TR was a man of many firsts. He was the first president to begin the 20th century, the first

to enter a submarine, fly in an airplane, and the first to leave the country while holding the

office.[110] Acts like the construction of the Panama Canal and using the U.S. Navy as a form of

diplomacy only reinforced in his mind that he was a leader on the world stage, a belief rarely

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[108] Lewis L. Gould, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Shaping of the Modern Presidency.* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991): 355. Gould states--"Although Roosevelt occupied the White House during an era of peace and relative prosperity, he arrived there just as an accumulation of problems associated with industrialization, urbanization, and a newly acquired overseas emprire vastly complicated the context in which a president functioned.

[109] Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations.* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1981).

[110] Robert A. Wilson and David McCullough, *Power and Presidency* (New York: Public Affairs, 1999), 8-9.

shared by his predecssors. Perhaps, the fact that TR was the youngest President (42) in the history

of the United States helped him establish a level of repoire with the populace easier than his

predecessors.[111] Significantly, during this era the world saw rise to improved photography

techniques and an explosion of newspapers and magazines—known as print media today. TR

embraced this new media and used it to communicate his narrative to multiple audiences.

Prior to serving as the 26th POTUS, it is important to reflect on a few of the experiences

that shaped his logic and fueled his passions in order to provide context to how he used the

presidency, the "bully pulpit," to lead the information campaign for the country.[112] It has been

often said that no man has enjoyed serving as POTUS as much as Theodore Roosevelt.

TR was educated at Harvard College, graduating magna cum laud in 1880. In his senior

year, he pursued his interests in naval history by beginning to write *The Naval War of 1812*,

which later published and recognized as one of scholarly merit. The relevance of noting this goes

well beyond the fact TR became an accomplished author; he later became the Assistant Secretary

of the Navy and while President revitalized and set the U.S. Navy on a course to be the most

dominant navy in the world. The point is that TR used "battleship diplomacy" to communicate a

message to the world.[113] The navy in this context was a metaphor, representing technological

innovation and power. Also during this period, the nation saw rise in the development of

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[111] President Theodore Roosevelt (42)was the youngest unelected President of the United States; whereas President Kennedy (43)was the youngest elected President.

[112] Lewis L. Gould, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Shaping of the Modern Presidency*,355. Gould states—"He functioned superbly as an educator who relished the "bully pulpit" of the White House as a forum for lecturing the American public on topics ranging from civic duty, social efficiency, and "orderly liberty" to corporate regulation and America's leadership role in international affairs."

[113] President Roosevelt's Latin America Policy (1901-1909) which has often been referred to as Battleship Diplomacy.

transportation and communication technologies, which served both vehicles for expanding trade and gaining recognition as a new power in the geo-political landscape.

What is very intriguing about TR, was his relationship with Alfred T. Mahan, U.S. Naval Captain and scholar, both were omnivorous readers, avid students of international relations and a love for naval history.[114] Each were naval theorist in their own right, as Richard Turk describes, "a relationship of equals," that saw sea power as the tool to balance power around the world.[115] The central premise behind Mahan's naval classic, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History: 1660-1783,* was the realization that it was impossible to wield control across the vast seas all the time. He defined control of the sea to represent the ability to converge at a selected place and time with sufficient force to defeat an adversary that may aspire to attack.[116] Mahan's logic sounds like a play out of Swiss military philosopher, Antoine Henri Jomini's, *The Summary of the Art of War*, that being concentration of force at the decisive point. Through this logic, the battle fleet should remain in tact, never divided.

To apply Mahanian logic to strategic communication and diplomacy, perhaps, the "sea" metaphorically describes the vastness of today's global information environment. Certainly, his realization that control of this vast space was not practical nor feasible highlights a core principle of theory of Communication Pragmatics, which posits, *control is impossible and dysfunctional*. Moreover, for the diplomat, Mahan suggests that a strong navy designed for offensive purposes, similar to the British Royal Navy, would serve as a credible force deterrent that would allow the

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[114] Richard W. Turk, *The Ambiguous Relationship: Theodore Roosevelt and Alfred Thayer Mahan* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 3.

[115] Ibid., 20

[116] Kenneth Wimmel, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Great White Fleet: American Sea Power Comes of Age* (Dulles, Virginia: Brassey's, 1998), 58.

nation to project power further from its shores, thus adding to its security and global reach. It is important to note that Mahan declared in time of war, a nation's navy should be used to seek out and destroy the enemy's navy.[117]

Critics argued that Mahan's advocacy for seapower led to a shift in the nation's foreign policy from one of isolation to one resembling imperialist. However, Mahan refutes these claims saying that he was an "outspoken anti-imperialist."[118] However, what was undisputed is TR's laudatory praise for Mahan's work and its influence on how he would later use the navy as President to communicate to both international and domestic audiences alike.

It is here where the second principle of Communication Pragmatics may be seen to be present. However, it is the contention of the author that TR used the navy as a means for cybernetic feedback; whereas, Japanese leadership during this time period may argue that TR used the navy to *perturb the international and political system to shift states behaviors*. Roosevelt's use of the navy was seen on multiple occasions as the "stick" in his dual diplomacy approach, often referred to as "Speak softly and carry a big stick" ideology.[119]

Panama Canal –"Big Stick Diplomacy"

In 1903, TR used his favorite tool, the U.S. Navy, to back a small Panamanian revolt against Colombian rule after his earlier attempts to negotiate with the Columbian Senate failed. In this context, one could conclude that in Roosevelt's mind he saw the U.S. naval warships as a

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[117] Ibid., 59

[118] Ibid., 61

[119] Tom Parker, "The Realistic Roosevelt." *The National Interest*, (Fall 2004), http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/foreignpol.htm (accessed February 20, 2009).

machine having a dual purpose—first, preventing Columbia from reinforcing the uprising with troops via the sea and second, deterring outside European interference.[120] Once the revolt proved successful, he quickly recognized the state of Panama, which emerged from the intervention.[121] Next, he negotiated the second Hay-Pauncefote Treaty with the new government of Panama for the rights to construct the Panama Canal.[122] This isthmus served one of strategic and economic importance to the U.S., for it shortened the route of commercial shipping by nearly 8,000 miles from San Francisco and New York; while, ships bound for Japan from the East Coast of the U.S. saved about 3,000 miles.[123] Most importantly, it served as a vital line of communication to South America.

From a strategic communication perspective, TR used the canal and the navy as symbols to the rest of the world displaying American ingenuity, American machinery, national accomplishment and power, which he reinforced through his narratives.[124] Not only did Panama emerge as a recognized state during this period, new technological advancements in media emerged providing a new platform for the President to communicate to friends, allies, and potential threats in the Pacific and Caribbean. In 1906, TR went to Panama to inspect the work firsthand, and travelled via the battleship, USS Oregon—a message in itself. David McCullough

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[120] Richard W.Turk, *The Ambiguous Relationship*, 52-53.

[121] Michael Nelson, *CQ Press Guide to The Presidency Fourth Edition.* (Washington D.C.: CQ Press, 2008),702.

[122] Tom Parker, "The Realistic Roosevelt." *The National Interest*, (Fall 2004), http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/foreignpol.htm (accessed February 20, 2009).

[123] "American Canal Construction," http://www.pancanal.com/eng/history/history/american.html (accessed on February 20, 2009).

[124] Lewis L. Gould, 1991, 99. Gould states—"The dominant foreign policy theme of his first administration "was accomplishment", as was evident in his successes regarding the Panama Canal, the Venezuela imbroglio, and the Alaskan boundary dispute.

notes in his biography of TR, that the photo of him on the "95-ton Bucyrus-Erie steam shovel wearing a white-line suit" in Panama" was the first great presidential photo opportunity in history, and one picture has become a metaphor for the age."[125]

What should not be forgotten in the wake of this unprecedented achievement is that TR had used the naval fleet as a show of force against the nation of Columbia. Also, what should not be lost is that TR did not use a whole-of-government approach to conduct strategic communication as depicted in his remarks, "I took the isthmus, started the canal and then left Congress not to debate the canal, but to debate me."[126] Not only did he not take a whole-of-government approach, according to Turk, TR's tendency as President was "to be his own secretary of state and his own secretary of the navy."[127] Without question, this borders on abuse of presidential power; however, from a strategic communication vantage point, it is in alignment with another principle of the Pragmatic Complexity Model, which believes "*less is more*." Arguably, this notion that "less is more" should be interpreted either via message or messenger, for each add to the dynamics of the system.

TR's statement to Congress, certainly arrogant to say the least; yet, implicit was his extensive knowledge of opportunities and threats emerging within his domestic and international political environments. He understood the tensions at home and abroad. His statement primarily was tailored towards the national audience and one aimed at expanding executive power at the expense of Congress. TR's use of the "*bully pulpit*" coupled with a nation that supported his expansionist policies facilitated the political momentum needed to push his agenda—raising

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[125] McCullough and Wilson, *Power and Presidency,* 10.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Richard W. Turk, *The Ambiguous Relationship*, 55.

American stature on the global stage under Mahanian theory that sea power would correlate to dominant world power and a challenge to England for the title.[128]

In these three instances: TR transiting the Caribbean via naval vessel, posing on the steam shovel in a white suit at the Panama Canal, and using rhetoric to embolden nationalistic ideals, further bolstered his reputation as a transformative leader and a man of action. Certainly, not all in the international community saw him in this light; to some he represented a threat with imperialist intentions. However, in respects to these instances it appears TR understood his environment, saw his actions as means for perturbing the political system, valued new media and advancements in photography, and appreciated the power of coupling words with actions—an attribute of effective strategic communication. Though strategic communication and systems thinking were not part of the 20th century lexicon, TR understood to be credible on the global stage one needed to visualize the environment, have an offensive capability that could be employed and serve as a symbol to communicate the country's power. In Mahanian fashion, TR balanced his oratory skills and use of pragmatic statecraft with his "Big Stick" diplomacy, the U.S. Navy.

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[128] Kenneth Wimmell, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Great White Fleet*, 59.

The Propensity to the Sea—White Hulls and a Message to the World

> *"Prudential statecraft—the art of promoting lofty ideals through pragmatic means, abiding by the limits of the possible."[129]*

> *James R. Holmes*

Holmes description of "*prudential statecraft*" is a fitting definition for today's ambiguous term—strategic communication and an accurate portrayal of TR's uncanny ability to change the dynamics of a given situation. Put another way, his leadership, use of the media, and especially the use of his navy provided him enormous power to shift the propensity of paradigms he desired to change. Within Holmes passage, the word "pragmatic" additionally proves fitting to describe TR. In fact, Raymond Esthus in his publication said exactly that—TR was a "*pragmatic diplomatist*" who was eager to wield his power on the world stage to stabilize the international environment.[130] Though this may have been TR's intent in all actuality his use of the navy coupled with a message that did not resonate with its intended audience may have ultimately destabilized what he was trying to stabilize.

TR's logic was informed by Japan's impressive 48 hour naval victory over the Russian Baltic Fleet in the naval Battle of Tsushima and subsequently from his serving as chief mediator at the Portsmouth, New Hampshire peace conference in 1905. [131] During this conference TR secretly accepted the Japanese annexation of Korea; in order to gain Japan's promise to not intervene in China, Hawaii and the Philippines. Though annexation appeared to be holding, he

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[129] James R. Holmes, "A Striking Thing: Leadership, Strategic Communications, and Roosevelt's Great White Fleet," (Naval War College Review, Winter 2008), 53.

[130] Raymond A. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and the International Rivalries* (Waltham: Ginn-Blaisdell, 1970), 165.

still feared without a strong naval presence in the Pacific the U.S. would not be able to maintain its sphere of influence. Most importantly, TR wanted to ensure the Japanese Fleet's recent victory over the Russians was short-lived, thus one of the many reasons for sending his navy on a cruise around the world.

At the same time, emerging challenges brewing in the Caribbean basin largely attributed to the Dominican Republic's failure to pay its foreign debt and the belief that Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany would exploit this opportunity to establish naval bases near American republics and vital interests.[132] This gave rise to the Roosevelt Corollary—which TR deemed the U.S. had the right to deploy "an international police power" to maintain order in the region. This outcome coupled with Secretary Hay's "Open Door" policy with China later set the stage for a clash with Japan.

In regards to the threat of European powers and not possessing a credible force to deter their expansionist aims, TR famously stated—

> *But though to boast is bad, and causelessly to insult another, worse; yet worse than all is it to be guilty of boasting, even without insult, and when called to the proof to be unable to make such boasting good. If the American Nation will speak softly, and yet build, and keep at a pitch of the highest training, a thoroughly efficient navy, the Monroe Doctrine will go far.[133]*

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[131] In the Russo-Japanese War, Japanese ships over the course of 48 hours sunk two-thirds of the Russian fleet, captured six ships, allowing only four to reach Vladivostok and six to find safety in neutral ports.

[132] James R. Holmes, "A Striking Thing: Leadership, Strategic Communications, and Roosevelt's Great White Fleet," 56.

[133] Hermann Hagedorn, *The Americanism of Theodore Roosevelt: Selections from his Writings and Speeches* (Cambridge: Riverside Press,1923), 226-227.

Certainly, one sees the origination of his "Big Stick" ideology and belief in "nautical

diplomacy."[134] One could assert from this passage that the navy not only represented the military

side of national power, but additionally served as a metaphor for both the economic and

informational components of national power. That is the navy symbolized the emergence of

steam technology during the industrial revolution, which correlated into added security for

economic advancement via development of new markets. Similarly, the navy symbolized

strength, innovation and American ingenuity, which transformed a physical machine into a

billboard for the world to see. With reference to the word "machine," Fiske describes the navy

as—*"An aggregation of many parts so related to each other and to some external influence that*

the parts can be made to operate together, to attain some desired end or object."[135]

Fiske just as easily could have defined the navy as a system. Certainly, a system and

machine share similar attributes. In this respect, one would soon see the fleet, that representing a

closed system, would begin operating in the open system of international waters bounded by

global powers. This made evident during TR's second term.

To celebrate the crowning achievement of a transformed modern industrial navy and to

make sure the rest of the world knew it, TR announced the deployment of four U.S. Navy

Battleship squadrons consisting of sixteen battleships, eight armored cruisers, six torpedo-boat

destroyers, and a host of other auxiliary vessels to embark on a cruise around the world.[136] This

voyage would depart Hampton Roads, Virginia in December 1907 and not return until February

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[134] Kenneth Wimmel, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Great White Fleet*, 244.

[135] Bradley A. Fiske, RADM. *The Navy as a Fighting Machine* (London: Hugh Rees, 1916), 406.

[136] Robert Wilson, *Power and Presidency*, 9.

1909.[137] Each of the vessels' hulls painted white as a symbol of peace, but most importantly a statement of grandeur. The headlines captured exactly that, coining the voyage as the *Great White Fleet* (GWF).[138] The intent was to circumnavigate the globe and demonstrate to the world community an American naval presence of extraordinary capability.

During port visits, crews demonstrated professionalism and diplomacy. Most importantly, their visits created news and that news spread across the globe quickly as the GWF transited one port to another. This demonstrated the importance of cybernetics in strategic communication planning. Arguably, one of the most successful strategic communication campaigns of history, at least in respects to TR's second term accomplishments. Its presence invoked an array of emotions amongst western allies and far eastern powers. Not all international audiences interpreted the U.S. naval presence as a sign of goodwill. Scholars contend, the GWF entered the Port of Yokohama, Japan in October 1908, though greeted peacefully by the Japanese it increased tensions between the nations that plausibly would lead to attacks on Pearl Harbor three decades later. Certainly, one scholars view as causal is another scholar's correlation. Whether this action served as the cause for the attacks on Pearl Harbor is debatable. What is not is that the act perturbed the international political system, which appears to have achieved what TR intended in the first place.

Holmes reinforces the belief that TR's message was not received as desired when he cites Commander Taniguchi Naomi, the Japanese naval attaché in Washington, who states--"The cruise was aimed at not only enhancement of military efficiency in time of war but also implicitly

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[137] James R. Holmes, "A Striking Thing: Leadership, Strategic Communications, and Roosevelt's Great White Fleet," 51.

at intimidating Japan."[139] The relevance of this demonstrates and affirms the Pragmatic

Complexity Model which states "interpretation and attribution of the actions of system members

cannot be controlled."[140] Moreover, demonstrates that control of message is impossible. TR

publicly stated that his intention "was to impress the American people."[141] However,

internationally his message was to convey that the function of the navy was as "a police force and

not as a threat."[142] In regards to Latin America, TR described his policy as—"*If I possibly can I

want to do nothing to them. If it is absolutely necessary to do something, then I want to do as

little as possible*."[143]

Though this is what TR publicly stated, many international stakeholders perceived this

deployment as something starkly different. In their eyes, they were watching a military power

send a "shot across the bow" as a warning that a new power had emerged on the sea. Moreover, it

intensified their suspicions that America had imperialist aspirations and perhaps would soon

encroach on their territorial possessions. One writer according to Turk explicitly stated TR was

sending the fleet to stir up trouble with the Japanese."[144] Even in the 20th century, commentary

such as this did not help ease tensions between the U.S. and Japan.

Without question, TR assumed risk by sending the fleet on a cruise around the world for

it violated Jominian and Mahanian principle of never splitting your force; however, the strategic

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[139] Ibid., 59

[140] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 35.

[141] James R. Holmes, "A Striking Thing: Leadership, Strategic Communications, and Roosevelt's Great White Fleet," 54.

[142] Ibid., 58

[143] Ibid., 57

communication benefit, to elevate American prestige while deterring European and Far Eastern aggressors, proved to outweigh the risk. Accompanying any change are always challenges and in respects to the cruise, there were many—logistics concerns with coaling stations and unchartered waters added to the complexity of the mission.

From a systems perspective, what emerged from the cruise was a shift in international stakeholder behavior coupled with added layers of complexity now that a Western nation possessed the capability to project its power thousands of miles from its coastline. As Bar-Yam described scale matters in relation to complexity, and in this event given the introduction of a formidable naval fleet circumnavigating the globe, scale was enormous.

When looking at the event from a strategic communication perspective, scale and interdependence witnessed by how nations responded to the fleet and the press it generated provided cybernetic feedback to the success or failure of the event. According to Senge, there were two types of feedback—reinforcing and balancing. In this case, both were present. From an American perspective, the demonstration of the GWF demonstrated negative feedback, which served as a balancing mechanism for those contemplating on intervening in U.S. affairs. From a Japanese perspective, the GWF reinforced their innate beliefs, thus producing positive feedback, that the U.S. was a rising hegemon that would threaten their territorial possessions and potentially challenge their Imperial navy in Eastern waters.

TR, like Jervis, understood one would have to demonstrate power other than through rhetoric if one were to remain credible. What also demonstrated in this case study was the recognition of non-linearity. That being small changes in an input having large changes in an

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[144] Richard W. Turk, *The Ambiguous Relationship*, 91.

output. This was evident by the actions of Japan following the voyage of the GWF. Instead of the voyage serving as a pacifier with Japanese, it actually provoked fear, which in turn changed the speed and propensity of Japan's battleship and naval production. In essence, it put Japan on a war footing, most likely years before it would have predicted. No message could change that mindset after seeing the GWF in the Yokohama port. In reality, TR sent a shock to the international political community changing the propensity of the system.

The cruise around the world demonstrates that TR thought systemically about his environment, understood that by interjecting the U.S. Navy into the calculus of foreign leaders and foreign press it would serve as a strategic communication multiplier both domestically and internationally. Moreover, it reveals TR's propensity for risk and his belief that something positive would emerge from the voyage. History looks favorably upon TR and literature reviewed suggests that he was willing to take risks if he believed it would ultimately add to the security and economic prosperity of the nation.

This case highlights principles of the Communication Pragmatics Theory nested within the Pragmatic Complexity Model. *First*, the appreciations for the complexity of the international system in which stakeholders interpret actions and make assertions about what they believe are the motives and intentions behind the actions of others. Thus, the Japanese interpretation of TR's navy was far from peace oriented and more as a demonstration of military power.

Second, the purpose of communication was not to cause acceptance; rather obtain feedback and in this case, ultimatley perturb the system. This was evident by the second and third order effects that occurred following the port visits by the US Naval fleet between late 1907 and 1909. This principle parlays into systemic logic of non-linearity, demonstrated by Japan's increased expenditures on naval production shortly thereafter.

Third, the model suggests failure is the norm. One may argue that TR in fact believed his strategic communication efforts would indeed fail; but given his early successes with promoting the Panama Canal this may not have been in his calculus. What is clear, is that he was not naïve to the off chance the navy would be seen as a threat and attacked, as such, ordered his naval commanders to take precautions and to continue practicing their craft along their voyage.

Fourth, the notion that "less is more" in strategic communication messaging proves to have been practiced by TR; but, like others proves challenging nonetheless. He understood that the navy represented many things to many people and that messaging was important to quell fears; but he also realized the importance of letting the cruise play out. Once the ships set sale from Hampton Roads, TR relied heavily on his naval commanders to represent America via "nautical diplomacy." In this context, the principle of "less is more" proves timeless given the potential for miscommunication and perverse effects. This case supports the theory of Communication Pragmatics and that the Corman, Tretheway, and Goodall Pragmatic Complexity Model is a construct that appears to have been implicit to transformative leaders as TR in the 20th century.

In summary, TR's leadership, systemic understanding of his environment and recognition of the power of strategic communication served as pillars which he wielded his "Big Stick" ideology. Though his term ended before the completion of the Panama Canal, he was able to greet the "Great White Fleet" as it returned to Hampton Roads in 1909. Furthermore, in this analysis of these two accomplishments the theories of Communication Pragmatics and Theory of Perturbation prove timeless and help describe TR's approach to gaining national prestige while communicating in the international arena for maritime dominance. Arguably, TR's approach was not one to persuade but one to develop cybernetic feedback mechanisms and to provoke a response in which he could then maneuver dependent on outcome. What TR accomplished with the navy was the ability to use it as a machine to achieve cybernetic results. That is understand

and define the functions, structures and processes within the international political environment in which systems build upon themselves in order to gain feedback that would inform his policies. In essence, by sending the navy on a world cruise the U.S. demonstrated its increased operational reach and created a fleet problem for the next three decades—defending the Philippines against attack from its near peer competitor—Japan.

President Barack Obama

> *On this day, we gather because we have chosen hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord. On this day, we come to proclaim an end to the petty grievances and false promises, the recrimination and worn out dogmas, that for far too long have strangled our politics.[145]*

> *-President Barack Obama*
> *Inauguration Speech January 20, 2009*

President Obama's inaugural address to the nation echoes a speech similar to President Franklin D. Roosevelt (F.D.R.) in 1932 and Winston Churchill's in 1940. Each calling for partisan bickering to end in the spirit of instilling nationalism. As President Obama described, a "unity of purpose over conflict and discord" will be required to overcome the political pressures of the day in order to shift the propensity of government policy in a new direction.[146] Though Theodore Roosevelt served as President at the start of the 20th century at a time the U.S. was not facing a crisis, Barak Obama begins his presidency a century later unquestionably in a time of crisis much like F.D.R.

This case study will concentrate primarily on President Obama's use of 'new media' technology during his Presidential campaign and narratives from his administration within his

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[145] Barack Obama, "Barack Obama Inaugural Address," Council on Foreign Relations website (January 2009) https://secure.www.cfr.org/publication/18293/ (accessed February 20, 2009).

[146] Ibid.

first hundred days in office. Furthermore, the Pragmatic Complexity Model will be used to inform this analysis. Perhaps, President Obama's use of modern technology in the Information Revolution, in the form of Web 2.0 applications, will serve as a "*Virtual Stick*" and "*Digital Diplomacy*" akin to the impact of Theodore Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet."[147]

Before we begin describing the GIE of the 21st century in order to analyze President Obama's use of strategic communication, it is best to first gain a better understanding of the man, his logic for the role of government at home, and how he envisions' leading America's role in international affairs. Barack Obama previously served in the U.S. Senate from January 2005 to November 2008, and as a member of the Illinois Senate representing the 13th district for seven years.[148] Prior to his election to the Illinois Senate, he served as a community organizer to help rebuild communities that were severely effected by the closure of steel plants in the area.[149] It was here that he developed an appreciation for listening, adopted a pragmatic approach to problem solving, and used numerous opportunities to refine his ability to bring a diverse group of people together. Both Roosevelt and Obama represent charismatic leaders with a gift for storytelling and an infatuation with the media. Arguably, these two Presidents have understood and embraced media and strategic communication like President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan, who have been deemed the "Great Communicator(s)" of their day.

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[147] Examples of Web 2.0 (social-media): Facebook, MySpace, YouTube. and Twitter—representative of social-networking applications. These applications go beyond Web 1.0 applications, which were interactive, however, feedback and content were relatively separated.

[148] "The Administration: Barack Obama," The White House website (January 2009), http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/president_obama/ (accessed on March 1, 2009).

[149] "President Barack Obama," (January 2009), http://www.america.gov/st/usg-english/2009/January/20090123155143wrybakcuh0.3344385.html (accessed on March 7, 2009).

While on the campaign trail, Barack Obama spoke at Depaul University where he explained the need for a "new 21st century American diplomacy" and his logic behind his foreign policy.[150] In this speech, he made explicit the need for the President to be willing "to talk to all nations, friend and foe" and made clear that it would be his intent to make diplomacy a high priority. [151] A policy of inclusion instead of exclusion. In his speech, he referenced Kennedy's relationship with Khrushchev, Nixon's meeting with Mao, and Reagan's negotiations with Gorbachev to establish precedents for his belief in engagement rather isolation.[152]

It is important to remember that radical ideologies have always existed in society—fascism, marxism and communism are examples of the 19th and 20th century and now radical Islamic fundamentalism in the 21st century. History has shown that the military alone will not be able to achieve victory in these struggles. Thus, new leadership and 21st century tools coupled with a systems mindset will serve better as the recipe to meet present and emerging challenges—a global economic crisis, and two protracted conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In regards to Afghanistan, President Obama explicitly stated at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina in February 2009, that, *"We have learned that in the 21st century, we must use all elements of American power to achieve our objectives, which is why I am committed to building our civilian national security capacity so that the burden is not continually pushed on to our*

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[150] Barack Obama, "Barack Obama's Foreign Policy Speech." Council on Foreign Relations, (October 2007), https://secure.www.cfr.org/publication/14356/barack_obamas_foreign_policy_speech.html (accessed February, 20 2009).

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

military.''[153] Implicit within this statement is the power of information and the art of conducting strategic communication. Moreover, the understanding that the 20th century Message-Influence Model needs to be replaced by a model that accounts for a complex global information environment as seen in the 21st century.

In July 2007, citizen Barck Obama wrote an essay for Foreign Affairs, "Renewing American Leadership," which serves as a primary source for understanding his logic towards both domestic and international issues. Within the essay, he makes clear the call to protect the U.S. citizens from international terrorism, while serving as an example for those seeking freedom. His theory's central premise appears that security at home is dependent upon security and stability of others that live beyond the U.S. borders.[154] For this reason, he framed the GIE within this context—

> *Today, we are again called to provide visionary leadership. This century's threats are at least as dangerous as and in some ways more complex than those we have confronted in the past. They come from weapons that can kill on a mass scale and from global terrorists who respond to alienation or perceived injustice with murderous nihilism. They come from rogue states allied to terrorists and from rising powers that could challenge both America and the international foundation of liberal democracy. They come from weak states that cannot control their territory or provide for their people. And they come from a warming planet that will spur new diseases, spawn more devastating natural disasters, and catalyze deadly conflicts.*[155]

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[153] Barack Obama, "Remarks of President Barack Obama – As Prepared for Delivery Responsibly Ending the War in Iraq" Camp Lejeune, North Carolina (February 2009), http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/ (accessed March 7, 2009.

[154] Barack Obama, "Renewing American Leadership." Foreign Affairs (July/August 2007), http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070701faessay86401/barack-obama/renewing-american-leadership.html (accessed March, 7 2009).

[155] Ibid.

Obama explicitly stated that the threats he described require a new form of leadership, one that is informed by history but, not restrained by "mental models" of the past.[156] In order to assert his new leadership on the world stage, he signals that his engagement theme will not be "*defined by what [the U.S. citizens] are against; [rather] must be guided by a clear sense of what [the U.S.] stand[s] for.*"[157] Through this reframing of message, the President communicates to multiple audiences what the nation stands for, nolonger what the nation is against. This appears a welcome change from the previous administration's policies.

'New Media'—"The Art of Digital Diplomacy"

Barack Obama, like TR, is a man of many firsts. He is the first ever African—American president of the Harvard Law Review; the first African—American to be elected as the President of the United States; the first President with a "Facebook page and a YouTube channel;" the first administration to create The Office of Public Liaison & Intergovernmental Affairs (OPL-IGA).[158] This new office is President Obama's initial media effort to focus on three critical elements of his strategic communication policy: *communication* via social-media applications; *transparency* of administration; and *citizen participation*.[159] According to the website, the purpose of the office is to—

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[156] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*, 8.

[157] Barack Obama, "Renewing American Leadership." Foreign Affairs (July/August 2007), http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070701faessay86401/barack-obama/renewing-american-leadership.html (accessed March 7, 2009).

[158] Brandon Griggs, "Obama poised to be first 'wired' president," CNN.com, (January 2009), http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/01/15/obama.internet.president/index.html. Source: for White House Office of Public Liaison http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/opl/ (accessed on February 28, 2009).

[159] http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/change_has_come_to_whitehouse-gov/ (accessed January 21, 2009).

Take the Administration out of Washington and into communities across America,
stimulating honest dialogue and ensuring that America's citizens and their elected
officials have a government that works effectively for them and with them.[160]

Of note, the White House website provides RSS (Really Simple Syndication) web feed formats

that allow readers who want to subscribe to timely updates of information via their personal

digital assistants (PDA). Thus, allowing one to stay "plugged in" to the global information

environment (GIE) and a means for feedback to the administration.

What is Web 2.0 and how does it help a Presidential administration conduct better

strategic communication efforts in an Information Age? Arguably, Web 2.0 is an emerging

phenomenon that has revolutionized how people communicate, how they organize, and where

they seek to interact. According to Bruce Gregory, professor at George Washington University,

the Web 2.0 world is composed of "interactive media and user generated content" which is

changing the media habits among the younger generation.[161]

President Obama demonstrated his understanding of this paradigm shift and the power of

social-networking during his campaign and now in his first hundred days in the White House. In

his efforts to promote this new style of communication with the domestic populace he

reemphasizes the message of "*citizen participation*."

Two of the most viewed social-media applications employed on the White House website

include *The Briefing Room Blog,* and the President's *Weekly Address* video also posted on

Saturdays to YouTube. A blog is simply an online journal written in a personal style that can

range from a myriad of topics and may be subscribed to using RSS technology as demonstrated

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[160] http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/opl/ (accessed on February 28, 2009).

[161] Bruce Gregroy, "Public Diplomacy and National Security: Lessons from the U.S. Experience,"
Small Wars Journal, http://smallwarsjournal.com/mag/docs-temp/82-gregory.pdf (accessed March 7, 2009).

on the Whitehouse website .[162] YouTube is considered a content community which organizes

around particular forms of media such as photos and videos. The latter certainly is a departure

from modern Presidents who have relied for decades on a weekly radio address to the nation to

communicate its policies dating back to President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first "Fireside Chat" on

March 12, 1933. [163]

Today, President Obama mirror's F.D.R's approach of speaking candidly with the

American people now coined "*fireside webcasts.*"[164] What this demonstrates to the American

people is that President Obama is aware of his environment, embraces 'new media' technology

and understands innovative ways of communicating to multiple audiences. Of note, President

Obama had more than 5.7 million supporters on his official Facebook page (as of 28 February

2009), while his campaign had a database of almost 13 million supporters and emails.[165] This 21st

century innovative practice of social media operations and new two-way communication model

has been dubbed—*Obama 2.0.*[166]

Social-media applications such as *Facebook, Twitter,* and *MySpace* though extremely

effective during Obama's 2008 Presidential campaign, remain constrained by older information

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[162] "What is social media? An e-book from iCrossing," (November 2007), http://www.icrossing.co.uk/ebooks (accessed on December 10, 2008.

[163] "FDR's first radio "fireside chat" calms the nation during depression era banking crisis," http://www.radioheardhere.com/history.htm (accessed on February 28, 2009).

[164] Barack Obama, "Barack Obama's Foreign Policy Speech," Council on Foreign Relations (October 2007), https://secure.www.cfr.org/publication/14356 (accessed on January 30, 2009).

[165] Brandon Griggs, "Obama poised to be first 'wired' president,"(2009).

[166] Ibid.

architecture in the White House and security protocols.[167] These applications represent an open

system and with this openness presents numerous security challenges and associated political

risks. *Facebook* and *MySpace* represent social networks which allow individuals to connect with

friends to communicate; whereas, *Twitter* is a microblog application where smaller amounts of

information are transmitted via mobile phone networks.

However, when technologies fall into the wrong hands unintended consequences may

emerge, as is the case with Twitter. It is now feared that terrorists are using the microblogging

capability to assist in their efforts to coordinate devious activities.[168] The article further explains

that Twitter is increasingly being used for purposes other than what it was intended and over time

may evolve into a targeting tool.[169] Moreover, terrorists may use their mobile phone technology

to receive Twitter micro narratives and images to communicate either detonation instructions and

targets or to use real-time imagery from the device to conduct remote detonations.[170] The intent of

this recognition helps describe the complex information environment President Obama and his

administration face today.

Where the 20th century gave rise to the Industrial age producing a culture of men serving

machines, as witnessed by sailors powering modern industrial naval ships by coal, the 21st

century has brought connectivity, and a system (world wide web) archictecture that allows

machines programmed by code to now serve men. Unfortunately, these machines are amoral and

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[167] Jim Rutenberg and Adam Nagourney, "Melding Obama's Web to a YouTube Presidency," The New York Times, (January 2009), http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/26/us/politics/26grassroots.html (accessed on February 2, 2009).

[168] Heather Havenstein, "Twitter for terrorists: U.S. Army report lays out terror scenarios," Computer World, (October 2008).

[169] Ibid.

do not discriminate between those who wish to bring peace and prosperity and those who wish to incite fear and destruction.

Narrative—What Americans Stands For not Against

Barack Obama's 2008 Presidential election victory not only improved America's image globally, it signaled the rise of a formidable counter narrative to Al Qaeda's message. The symbolism of an African American minority being sworn in as the next President of the United States sent a strong rebuke to that of "al Qaeda's narrative of the US, an evil empire that oppresses its own minorities and has little regard for the rest of the world."[171] The coupling of rhetoric, actions, and 'new media' without question, perturbed the Islamic world's depiction of America at least in the near term. This election signaled not only a "change" at home, it also represented a "change" in how America would carry out its policies abroad. Most importantly, it demonstrated that America would compete in the global "war of ideas" through narratives and policies of engagement rather isolation.

In President Obama's inauguration speech, he conducted strategic communication from a world stage wired like no other President in modern history, communicating to multiple audiences both domestic and foreign, and to both friend and foe. Excerpts from his speech demonstrate the vast GIE and his understanding as to the role America should play with in it. He spoke directly and clearly to the extremist by stating-

[170] Ibid.

[171] "Experts: Al-Qaeda Tape Demonstrates That It Feels Threatened by Obama Victory," (November 2008), http://www.nsnetwork.org/node/1068 (accessed on March 1, 2009).

We will not apologize for our way of life, nor will we waver in its defense. And for those who seek to advance their aims by inducing terror and slaughtering innocents, we say to you now that our spirit is stronger and cannot be broken—you cannot outlast us, and we will defeat you.[172]

To Muslims, President Obama attempted to offer a new pragmatic approach as a way forward. In short, he attempted to change the political calculus or adversarial logic of how extremist actions are viewed by other Muslims. According to the Pragmatic Complexity Model the communication concept is that there will be interpretation of the actions by other system members. He states—

To the Muslim world, we seek a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. To those leaders around the globe who seek to sow conflict, or blame their society's ills on the West, know that your people will judge you on what you can build, not what you destroy.[173]

To the American people he describes that there needs to be a balance between new and old principles to meet the challenges of the 21st century. He states—

Our challenges may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success depends—honesty and hard work, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism—these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history.[174]

Each message was constructed in a manner that put the onus on the population to determine what was tolerable and what was out of tolerance. Instead of using language that was accusatory, the message was framed in a manner to inject a question within the audience's psyche. Most importantly, this form of strategic communication—a counter narrative, was used to perturb the

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[172] "President Obama's Inaugural Address," (January 2009), http://www.whtiehouse.gov/the_press_office/President_Barack_Obamas_Inaugural_Address/(accessed March 1, 2009).

[173] Ibid.

[174] Ibid.

current propensity of the GIE while simultaneously gaining cybernetic feedback to the messages resonance within selected target audiences.

On Friday, February 27, 2009, President Obama spoke to US Marines at Camp Lejeune, NC regarding ending the war in Iraq. Within this speech, President Obama not only addressed military families, he spoke directly to the people of Iraq. He proclaimed—

> *So to the Iraqi people, let me be clear about America's intentions. The United States pursues no claim on your territory or your resources. We respect your sovereignty and the tremendous sacrifices you have made for your country. We seek a full transition to Iraqi responsibility for the security of your country. And going forward, we can build a lasting relationship founded upon mutual interests and mutual respect as Iraq takes its rightful place in the community of nations.[175]*

One may conclude from these recent speeches the President is outlining how he would like to move the current system to a more desired state through his dialogue. Likewise he explains that through a renewed diplomatic effort the USG would pursue strategic engagement opportunities by diplomatic envoys led by --George Mitchell, Dennis Ross and Richard Holbrooke in support of the Secretary of State.[176] It appears that within the proverbial elements of national power the new tool of choice is diplomacy rather than the use of the military. This is a noticeable difference between TR's approach to international affairs and Barack Obama. In fact, Barack Obama's approach will be more focused on rebuilding an Army and Marine Corps as TR's was to rebuilding the Navy. It is still too early to truly know whether President Obama's policies will succeed or fail; yet, one who once viewed the world through a hawkish lens now finds the utility in a dovish approach in navigating a complex global information environment.

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[175] "Remarks of President Barack Obama Responsibility Ending the War in Iraq," (February 2009), http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-of-President-Barack-Obama-Responsibly-Ending-the-War-in-Iraq/ (accessed on March 1, 2009).

[176] Ibid.

President Obama's inauguration served as a defining moment in the nation's history. Though his presidency still is in its infancy, his gift of oratory and use of 'new media' technologies provide the impact needed to perturb the roots of Al Qaeda's message— that America oppresses the minority. Like TR, President Obama represents a transformative leader that serves as a symbol to audiences far from America's borders.

President Obama's use of 'new media' to communicate to diverse audiences demonstrates principles of the Communication Pragmatics Theory nested within the Pragmatic Complexity Model. *First, the interpretation and attribution of the actions of system members*, that is understanding the environment, linkages associated between actors within the system and tensions that may be points of intervention when crafting a strategy of engagement. In this context, the Obama administration presumably believed that one of the first official acts by the President should be to communicate its message to the Muslim world in order to gauge a response from system members. Thus, President Obama's logic for transforming America's image in the eyes of the Muslim world required that the first interview by President Obama be conducted with an Arabic news channel. The recipient of this interview was Al Arabyiya Arabic satellite news channel on 27 January 2009.

In order to synchronize the interview with the President and cabinet member actions, the Obama administration coordinated with Al Arabiya to wait before announcing the interview until President Obama had met with his Middle East peace envoy led by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Senator George Mitchell. Notwithstanding, the interview was conducted just days after President Obama had signed an Executive Order to close Guantanamo Bay Naval Base detention facilities, had announced that a withdrawal strategy in Iraq was underway, and that former Senator Mitchell's peace envoy was arriving in the Middle East for a nine-day tour of the

region.[177] These actions coupled with his seventeen minute interview with journalist, Hisham Melhelm of Al Arabyia served to send a new message to the Muslim world that a new approach was coming from Washington.

During the interview, President Obama declared, "My job is to communicate the fact that the United States has a stake in the well-being of the Muslim world, that the language we use has to be a language of respect."[178] Given his understanding of the significance language plays in the Muslim culture, he repeated the "importance of listening as a part of communication."[179]

Second, this silence reinforces the Pragmatic Complexity Model's principle that "*less is more*" and that messages may be communicated without the use of words. The power of understanding that what is not spoken is a message in itself. In the case of President Obama's interview with Al Arabiya, this was demonstrated when President Obama chose to not comment on the Israeli offensive in Gaza which resulted in over 1,300 Palestinians dead.[180]

Third, *the purpose of communication was not to cause acceptance; rather perturb the system*. This was evident by his language used to address specific audiences. President Obama's counter narrative to Al Qaeda's message to Muslims in several speeches coupled with his Executive Orders and use of Presidential envoys serve as means to obtain feedback and to perturb the system. Put another way, force a change in behavior of system actors which indirectly will

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[177] Barack Obama, "Closure of Guantanamo Detention Facility,"(January 2009), http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/ClosureOfGuantanamoDetentionFacilities/ (accessed on March 1, 2009).

[178] "President gives first interview since taking office to Arab TV—Obama tells Al Arabiya peace talks should resume," (January 2009), http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/01/27/65087.html (accessed on March 7, 2009).

[179] Ibid.

result in a shift in the propensity of the system. As Corman highlighted in the Pragmatic Complexity Model, Jervis' double-contingency occurs due to the interdependence of system members within the GIE. Each member's behavior is tied to external conditions within the environment. Depending on how one views the environment depends on actions taken within the system. What emerges from these reactions often are non-linear in nature. For instance, a foreign dignitary visits a country to make peace and days later after the visit terrorist attacks occur within the capital of that state. Political actions such as this represent non-linearity in complex adaptive systems.

Fourth, the Pragmatic Complexity Model suggests failure is the norm. That is the message sent will not be perceived as intended. Certainly, this principle within the model is more in alignment with the GIE than the Message-Influence Model of the past. A method the administration is using to reduce miscommunication in messaging is the incorporation of new social media technology and the implementation of a three part global engagement strategy—*communication, transparency* and *citizen participation*.[181] This principle is difficult to observe further emphasizing the importance of establishing feedback mechanisms; yet, the communication concept proves useful for constructing messages in a complex information environment. This notion if adopted properly should result in the communication staff asking a series of meta-questions which would facilitate contingency messages based off of reactions from

[180] Ibid.

[181] "Change has come to the Whitehouse.gov," (January 2009),
http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/change_has_come_to_whitehouse-gov/ (accessed on January 20, 2009).

initial message.[182] These contingency messages would link words and actions to either reinforce successful messaging or mitigate fallout of failed messages.

In summary, Barack Obama's systemic understanding of his environment within his first 100 days, recognition of the power of 'new media' and a desire to make his cabinet transparent to the citizens of the nation serve as hallmarks for communicating more efficiently and effectively in a GIE. Like TR and F.D.R., Barack Obama understands the power of strategic communication and the importance of embracing new emerging technologies. Today, President Obama no longer provides a weekly radio address to the nation instead he innovatively conducts "fireside webchats" or video blogs to communicate his vision and thoughts to multiple audiences. As demonstrated during this case study, the theories of Communication Pragmatics and Perturbation prove timeless and help describe Barack Obama's approach to improving America's image around the world while communicating to his domestic audience via a "digital diplomacy of deeds."

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[182] GAO Report 07-904 to the Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, July 2007. The report states, "In the reportIn June 2007, the Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Policy Coordinating Committee released a U.S. National Strategy for Public Diplomacy and Communication to guide and inform U.S. communication efforts led by State. The strategy describes a communication process model that is similar to the campaign-style approach in terms of outlining key steps in the communication process. Formal recognition of this model is a positive development and opens the rigorous approach toward their thematic communication efforts. However, the model remains a suggested tool and does not describe how and to what extent research should be used to support each step in the communication process" (3). This research methodology leads to the term meta-questions. Meta-questions are a series of questions asked in order to gain context about a complex problem.

CONCLUSION

What has become clear having studied President Theodore Roosevelt and President Barack Obama's approach to communicating in the 20th and 21st century global information environment respectively is that a systems way of thinking coupled with the use of 'new media'and cybernetics is the way forward for strategic communication efforts. Each President is representative of the metaphor Winston Churchill described as a "strong horse" leading a nation through transformation as competing ideologies, both domestic and abroad, attempt to shape the propensity of the GIE. From these two case studies, one can see the emergence of the 'bully pulpit' and the application of the theories of Communication Pragmatics and Perturbation.

Like, President Theodore Roosevelt who led the nation through the Industrial revolution; Barack Obama now leads the nation during the Information revolution. One may assert that each of these two Presidents possessed the charisma and 'prudential statecraft' to conduct strategic communication effectively; whereas, not all previous Presidents possessed the gift of oratory nor have understood the global environment. From these two case studies, one can see the evolution of the 'bully pulpit' and the application of the theories of Communication Pragmatics and Perturbation. Moreover, that the Pragmatic Complexity Model serves as a plausible replacement for the outdated 20th century linear Message-Influence Model.

Common to both was their need to communicate in a complex en adaptive environment. A world once divided by oceans and landmasses used to connect only by those industrialized nations with a navy. Now individuals within nation states are able to project power and

communicate their intent through a few key strokes and videos demonstrating their influence on the world stage equal to those of nations. Where the 20th century saw the evolution from steam to nuclear power and the invention of the internet, the 21st century has witnessed the power of information via social-networking applications. Each President used different tools and technologies available to them during their tenure to communicate their message to both domestic and international audiences.

President Theodore Roosevelt used advances in photography to capture him in a white suit on a steam shovel in Panama; as well as, photographs of him on the Presidential Yacht *Mayflower*, sailing to Virginia to be one with the Navy as the 'Great White Fleet' departs Hampton Roads on its voyage around the globe. President Roosevelt demonstrated his understanding of the logic of his perceived threats through the launching of the "Great White Fleet" on a cruise around the world and the construction of the Panama Canal to project national power and gain national prestige. His ability to visualize and think systemically about his environment coupled with his use of the the navy and use of 'new media' to establish a cybernetic feedback loop allowed him to conduct strategic communication on a scale unprecedented in modern history. In essence, he used the navy to not only perturb the international community he used it to test the system.

As his navy conducted nautical diplomacy around the world at various ports, news of the 'Great White Fleet' would capture headlines communicating the message that TR wanted to achieve—power and prestige. Moreover, the GWF was used by TR through an indirect approach to steal the headlines from the recent Japanese naval victory over the Russian fleet. This cybernetic feedback signaled to American diplomats the strength or absence of diplomatic ties between nation states along the route. Feedback obtained represented potential intervention points where the nation may choose to engage in the future regarding trade or security concerns. What is important to realize from all the goodwill received from the naval voyage is that not all

international stakeholders perceived the tour as was intended. What emerged shortly after the port visit in Yokohama, Japan in 1908 was a nation that soon mobilized its industrial capacity on a war footing to build the Imperial Navy. This causal relationship demonstrated non-linearity and the effects that may occur following an event that perturbed the international system.

President Obama, on the other hand, in the early stages of his presidency realized in order to improve America's image around the world it would have to first use the language of respect followed by the reversal of several of his predecessor's policies that were divisive amongst the populace. President Obama demonstrated his understanding of the global environment by removing symbols of American hegemonic power—the closure of Guantanamo Bay detention facility and announces an explicit timetable for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. In this context, President Obama appears more "dovish" than TR for he seeks more engagements by special envoys to conduct diplomacy versus the demonstration of military forces to shift the behaviors of actors within the international system.

A century later, President Barack Obama used emerging technologies like TR to communicate his vision. Tools of the 21st century have largely replaced 20th century print media and radio as primary means to communicate. Instead, 'new media' technology consisting of real-time streaming videos, chat rooms, blogs and a host of social-networking applications that are now accessible by cellular phones. Here, President Obama's administration is leveraging this 'new media' technology to make President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "fireside chats" new again. This time instead of having to huddle around a radio to hear the President speak, one can now subscribe to a digital feed from the White House website that will deliver the President's video directly to your phone. Information is no longer about television, radio or websites. Today, the information revolution is about producing, finding, and sharing information through networks. President Barack Obama's 2008 campaign serves as a great case study highlighting the power of social-media technology and new ways to conduct strategic communication.

Each of these frames in history, whether it be TR on a steam shovel at the Panama Canal, or Obama speaking to the nation via "web fireside chats" demonstrates American ingenuity and "out front leadership" by the commander-in-chief. Most importantly, it exhibits the President's understanding of the global information environment and the realization that both words and actions are needed together to communicate effectively on a world stage.

In order to conduct strategic communication more effectively, the 20th century Message-Influence Model needs updating by a model that accounts for complexity. The Pragmatic Complexity Model proves a plausible replacement largely due to its account of complexity and its acknowledgement that content and relationships matter. This model makes explicit that control is impossible and that context matters. It acknowledges unlike the Message-Influence Model that repetition of message no longer proves a viable strategy given the relationships of mutual interdependence associated within the 21st century information environment.

Alex Ryan and Steven Johnson within the literature reviewed explain emergence theory and how it helps to understand that strategic communication as not a linear process; but, rather an interdependent systems process that produces emergent behavior. With this knowledge, one gains a better understanding that repeated messages increase the potential of exacerbating tensions already existing within the system. Thus, variations of messages are encouraged, but in moderation to keep with the principle that "less is more." However, if one desires to achieve transformative change to the current propensity of the system one must perturb the system via words and actions. The military often is the mechanism used to support the theory of perturbation and for most of the 20th and 21st centuries has served as the nation's theory of action. President T. Roosevelt's use of the "Great White Fleet" and President Obama's order to withdraw military forces from Iraq while surging ground forces in Afghanistan certainly illustrates this point.

Additionally, the Pragmatic Complexity Model serves useful from a contingency planning perspective. This makes sense given the model expects failure of message. Thus, it facilitates a systemic mindset for strategic communicators, one that looks beyond the initial message. One could conclude that strategic communicators need to have a thorough understanding of the operating environment and perhaps would better be served by constructing messages based on the assumption that the initial message will fail rather than succeed.

Lastly, this paper raises the importance of narratives. As Corman contends the true challenge is not about constructing the right message or influencing the right audience; instead it is about reorganizing resources across the spectrum of government to be competitive in a "meaning-centered narrative world." For too long, the USG has failed at providing a counter narrative to oppose extremist ideologies. However, with the recent election of President Obama a credible messenger and message has emerged as seen by his actions—reversal of several contentious policies (Guantanamo Bay detention facility and the Iraq War) and in his recent interviews and speeches. 'New media' coupled with systems thinking with an emphasis placed on developing cybernetic feedback mechanisms serve as important ingredients needed within an updated communications model to account for complexity in order to be competitive in the 21st century global "war of ideas."

RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper recommends that the Pragmatic Complexity Model described earlier serve as the new 21st century communication model. In order to make this a reality, the USG must embrace the principles this model makes explicit: 1) that control of message is impossible, 2) less messaging equals more, and 3) the intent is not to influence or persuade, rather to perturb stable

system structures in order to overcome the system propensity.[183] The theories of Communication Pragmatics and Perturbation serve as foundations for this model and account for complexity unlike the Message-Influence Model currently being prescribed.

The fact that there is no Department of Information, or a cabinet level position responsible for the synchronization of USG communication efforts, lends one to the conclusion that only legislation or a presidential directive will serve as a forcing mechanism to overhaul the current government communication structure. Thus, in order to efficiently and effectively implement strategic communication efforts across the whole-of-government Presidential leadership and oversight will be needed. What must be communicated is the need for agencies to adopt a systemic mindset, and embrace 'new media' to coordinate actions with agency narratives nested within a whole-of-government approach.

Helle Dale, director of the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign Policy Studies at the Heritage Foundation, has written extensively on this topic and recommends that reforms are desperately needed and none more so than the State Department.[184] There is merit to this recommendation; however, one thing that is very seldom mentioned is the loss of institutional knowledge of former USIA employees currently populating State's bureaus who currently are retiring in droves. Their knowledge remains invaluable and needs to be captured. Without question, the President needs to increases budgets for programs and institutions that relate directly to public diplomacy initiatives, retention, increasing capacities and capabilities across the whole of government. Thus, this paper recommends that Department of State should make as many

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[183] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 161.

[184] Tony Blankley, Helle C. Dale, and Oliver Horn, "Reforming U.S. Public Diplomacy for the 21st Century," The Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #2211 (November 2008).

efforts as possible to capture the institutional knowledge of its former USIA employees before they leave the organization.

Likewise, for this undertaking to be successful, a common understanding of the concept of strategic communication must be made explicit. Within the literature reviewed, were a myriad of definitions surrounding strategic communication. In fact, many journal articles confused whether the term was singular or plural, adding to the confusion and limiting the advancement of a holistic approach across government. It is the author's contention that strategic communication is singular.

Like many political analysts have suggested, the Obama administration should immediately rename the War on Terrorism to something akin to international criminal activity as piracy is viewed off the Somalia coast. Like Corman, Goodall, and Trethewey, wars on "nouns" and "isms" are doomed to fail. They argue, "You cannot defeat that which cannot be properly named."[185] From a strategic communication perspective, trying to sell anything with "war" in the title makes gaining buy-in all that more difficult, while most likely eroding support along the way. The recent stand up of AFRICOM Unified Command structure may prove a legitimate feedback mechanism for interagency strategic communication efforts given the organization's deputy commander is a Department of State senior official. Lessons learned from this experiment may be applicable across the whole-of-government. At a minimum, Unified and Combatant Commanders should be leveraged to increase synchronization of strategic communication messages. What must be remembered is to remain true to the principles espoused within the Pragmatic Complexity Model.

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[185] Steven R. Corman, Angela Trethewey, and H.L. Goodall, Jr., *Weapons of Mass Persuasion*, 10.

Furthermore, recommend that a Task Force be formed separate of the Defense Science Board; but, inclusive of all government agencies, to table initiatives for improving efficiency and effectiveness of national strategic communication efforts. Legislative proposals by Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS) (S. 3546) and Representatives Smith andThornberry (HR. 1869) for the creation of a National Center for Strategic Communications are examples of such initiatives that may serve as plausible policy alternatives.[186] However, given the financial crisis at this time does not appear feasible.

Institutionalizing strategic communication across the whole-of-government will prove difficult given bureaucracy and parochial concerns by individual government agencies. However, an incremental approach using 'new media' technology, Web 2.0 applications, may provide the networking solution that in the future will serve as the mechanism for implementation. In order for this to occur interagency protocols will have to be overhauled and made explicit within a comprehensive communications strategy. With President Obama's administration representing the most 'wired' administration to date the time may be rapidly approaching for a paradigm shift with how the government communicates. Given the three cornerstones to his communication strategy are 'new media,'transparency and citizen participation, what better legacy to leave than a 'wired' government redesigned to face the challenges of the 21st century. The President's leadership coupled with a Presidential Directive plausibly would serve as the tools needed to force agencies to overcome parochial concerns in order better to serve the populace.

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[186] Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS), interview by author, 6 March 2008, SH-303.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF ACRONYMS

COI   Coordinator of Information

COIN   Counter Insurgency Operations

CPI   Committee on Public Information

CSC   Consortium for Strategic Communication

DOD   Department of Defense

DOS   Department of State

FIS   Foreign Information Service

FM   Field Manual

GIE   Global Information Environment

JP   Joint Publication

MBS   Mortgage-Backed Securities

NSC   National Security Council

NSS   National Security Strategy

OCPA   Office of the Chief of Public Affairs

OPL-IGA   The Office of Public Liaison & Intergovernmental Affairs

OSD   Office of the Secretary of Defense

OWI	Office of War Information
PA	Public Affairs
PDA	Personal Digital Assistant
POTUS	President of the United States
PSYOPs	Psychological Operations
SAMS	School of Advanced Military Studies
SPD	Support for Public Diplomacy
TR	President Theodore Roosevelt
USG	United States Government
USIA	United States Information Agency
USAWC	United States Army War College

APPENDIX B

LIST OF DEFINITIONS

Agent – An agent has the ability to interact with its environment. An agent can respond to what happens around it and can do things more or less purposefully. Most commonly, we think of an agent as a person, but it can also be as broad as a country. Robert Axelrod discusses a number of properties that are expected to be associated with an agent—these include: location— where the agent operates, capabilities—how the agent can affect the world; and memory—what impressions the agent can carry forward from its past. (Robert Axelrod, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier* (Perseus Press, 2000)).

Band of Tolerance –Refers to moving the propensity of the system within a desired state. It does not mean solving the problem, merely managing a complex problem within a margin of tolerance.

Blogs –A frequently updated, chronologically ordered publication of personal thoughts and opinions with permanent links to other sources, creating a historical archive. This can be published on personal websites or institutional websites as communication tools. (Source: Leveraging Web 2.0 in Government)

Complex Systems– is a new approach to science, which studies how relationships between parts give rise to the collective behaviors of a system and how the system interacts and forms relationships with its environment. (Yaneer Baryam, *Dynamics of Complex Systems* (Perseus Press, 1997)).

Complex Adaptive System –when a system contains agents or populations that seek to adapt (Robert Axelrod, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier* (Perseus Press, 2000)).

Cybernetics – comes from a Greek word meaning "the art of steering".Cybernetics is about having a goal and taking action to achieve that goal. Knowing whether you have reached your goal (or at least are getting closer to it) requires "feedback",a concept that comes from cybernetics. From the Greek, "cybernetics" evolved into Latin as "governor" Designers are rediscovering the influence of cybernetics on the tradition of 20th-century design methods, and the need for rigorous models of goals, interaction, and system limitations for the successful development of complex products and services, such as those delivered via today's software networks. And, as in any social cycle, students of history reach back with minds more open than was possible at the inception of cybernetics, to reinterpret the meaning and contribution of a previous era. (http://www.pangaro.com/published/cyber-macmillan.html).

Emergence – refers to the relationship between the details of a system and a larger view (Yaneer Baryam, Making Things Work: Solving Complex Problems in a Complex World (NECSI Knowledge Press, 2004)).

Facebook—social utility that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around an individual.

Global Information Environment – All individuals, organizations, or systems, most of which are outside the control of the military or National Command Authorities (NCA), that collect, process, and disseminate information to national and international audiences. (FM 100-6 Chp 1).

Interdependence - dependence on each other or one another; mutual dependence

Meta-Question - are a series of questions asked in order to gain context about a complex problem.

MySpace –A social networking site. (Source: http://www.techterms.com/definition/myspace)

Narrative— a story or account of events, experiences, or the like, whether true or fictitious.

New Media—. **(1)** The forms of communicating in the digital world, which includes electronic publishing on CD-ROM, DVD, digital television and, most significantly, the Internet. It implies the use of desktop and portable computers as well as wireless, handheld devices. Most every company in the computer industry is involved with new media in some manner. **(2)** The concept that new methods of communicating in the digital world allow smaller groups of people to congregate online and share, sell and swap goods and information. It also allows more people to have a voice in their community and in the world in general. (Source: http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia_term/0,2542,t=new+media&i=47936,00.asp#)

Potential - described by Francois Juilen states that there are two notions at the heart of Chinese strategy which form a pair—"the notion of situation or configuration (xing), as it develops and takes shape before our eyes (as a relation of forces); on the other hand, and counterbalancing this, the notion of potential (shi[a]), which is implied by that situation and can be made to play in one's favor"(17). This is often described by a mountain stream moving boulders. In this case, the rushing stream is thought to possess potential. In relation to strategic communication and diplomacy, these two Chinese notions help the strategic communicator evaluate the situation and understand that potential is circumstantial (22). Thus, one that is able to constantly adapt to another actor within the system one is able to increase power and eventually manipulate at one's will (25). Likewise, to "manage things, [one] must establish the potential of the situation" (26). In politics and social constructs, the position of authority, serves as the potential Thus, shifts in behaviors within the system are a result of one's position, not from oneself (27).

Propensity - a disposition to behave in a certain way or a natural inclination; Example described by Francois Juilen states that a slope serves as an image of the propensity that results from the relations of force that the general knows how to exploit to his advantage, by maneuvering his men.

Propaganda—Any form of communication in support of national objectives designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, or behavior of any group in order to benefit the sponsor, either directly or indirectly. (Joint Publication 1-02)

Public Affairs—Those public information, command information, and community relations activities directed toward both the external and internal publics with interest in the Department of Defense. Also called PA**.** (JP 3-61). (Source: JP 1-02)

Public Diplomacy—Those overt international public information activities of theUnited States Government designed to promote United States foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences and opinion makers, and by broadening the dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad. http://www.publicdiplomacy.org/1.htm.

Social media—Computer media used for social purposes, as a means of exchange, collaboration, and the social construction of knowledge. (Source: http://www.netlingo.com)

Soft Power—Getting others to want the outcomes that you want—co-opts people rather than coerces them. (Joseph Nye)

Strategic Communication——

1.Employing information coupled with actions to align target audience perceptions with policy goals.(OSD Military Support to Public Diplomacy Definition)

2. Focused USG processes and efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable to advance national interests and objectives through the use of coordinated information, themes, plans, programs and actions synchronized with other elements of national power (DOD JP 1-02 & 2006 QDR Definition).

3. The synchronized coordination of statecraft, public affairs, public diplomacy, military information operations, and other activities, reinforced by political, economic, military, and other actions, to advance US foreign policy objectives. (Former Director for Strategic Communications and Information on the National Security Council (NSC), Jeffrey Jones.

4. A systematic series of sustained and coherent activities, conducted across strategic, operational and tactical levels, that enables understanding of target audiences, identifies effective conduits, and develops and promotes ideas and opinions through those conduits to promote and sustain particular types of behavior. (Commander Steve Tatham, UK Naval Officer)

System - A system is a set of entities with relations between them. A system is a bounded region in space-time, in which the component parts are associated in functional relationships (Alex Ryan). A System is a set of variables sufficiently isolated to stay discussable while we discuss it *(*Ross Ashby). A system is a representation of an entity as a complex whole open to feedback from its environment. A system is an assembly of elements hooked together to produce a whole in which the attributes of the elements contribute to a behavior of the whole. The human body is a very complex system, made up of millions of cells with different functions. Galaxies are systems, as are cities, ecosystems, and complex machines such as airplanes or computers (http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/complex_adaptive_systems/).

Theory of Action –The theory of action is a single logic that binds together the pattern of actions into a coherent whole. The theory of action is defined as a hypothesis about the nature of the problem together with a proposed solution (FMI 5-2 Design, 31).

Twitter –is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that allows its users to send and read other users' updates, which are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length. (Source: http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia_term/0,2542,t=Twitter&i=57880,00.asp)

Video Blog—is a form of blogging where the medium is video.

Web 2.0—is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform. Chief among those rules is this: Build applications that harness network effects to get better the more people use them for more. (Web 2.0: A Strategy Guide—Amy Shuen)

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